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ABSTRACT

This book is a collection of papers on the effects of public violence on children in South Africa. Section 1 of this report is an overview of the findings of South Africa's Goldstone Commission of Inquiry into the Effects of Public Violence on Children. Section 2 concentrates on assessing problems and intervening to relieve them. The following essays are included: (1) "Introduction" (Brian Rock); (2) "Overview" (Norman Duncan and Brian Rock); (3) "Children and Violence: Quantifying the Damage" (Norman Duncan and Brian Rock); (4) "Going beyond the Statistics" (Norman Duncan and Brian Rock); (5) "Survey of Organizations Providing Services to Children" (Norman Duncan and Brian Rock); (6) "Inquiry Recommendations" (Norman Duncan and Brian Rock); (7) "Advisory Panel Recommendations"; (8) "Assessing the Impact of Violence on Children" (Peter Newell); (9) "Being Human vs. Having Human Rights" (Cosmas Desmond); (10) "Post-traumatic Stress in Children: Presentation and Intervention Guidelines" (Gill Eagle and Catherine Michelson); (11) "Working with Traumatized Children: A Community Project" (Sheila Miller); and (12) "The Survivors of Apartheid and Political Violence in KwaZulu-Natal" (Anne McKay). An appendix lists resource contacts. Each chapter contains references, and there is a reference list for each section. (Contains 28 tables.) (SLD)

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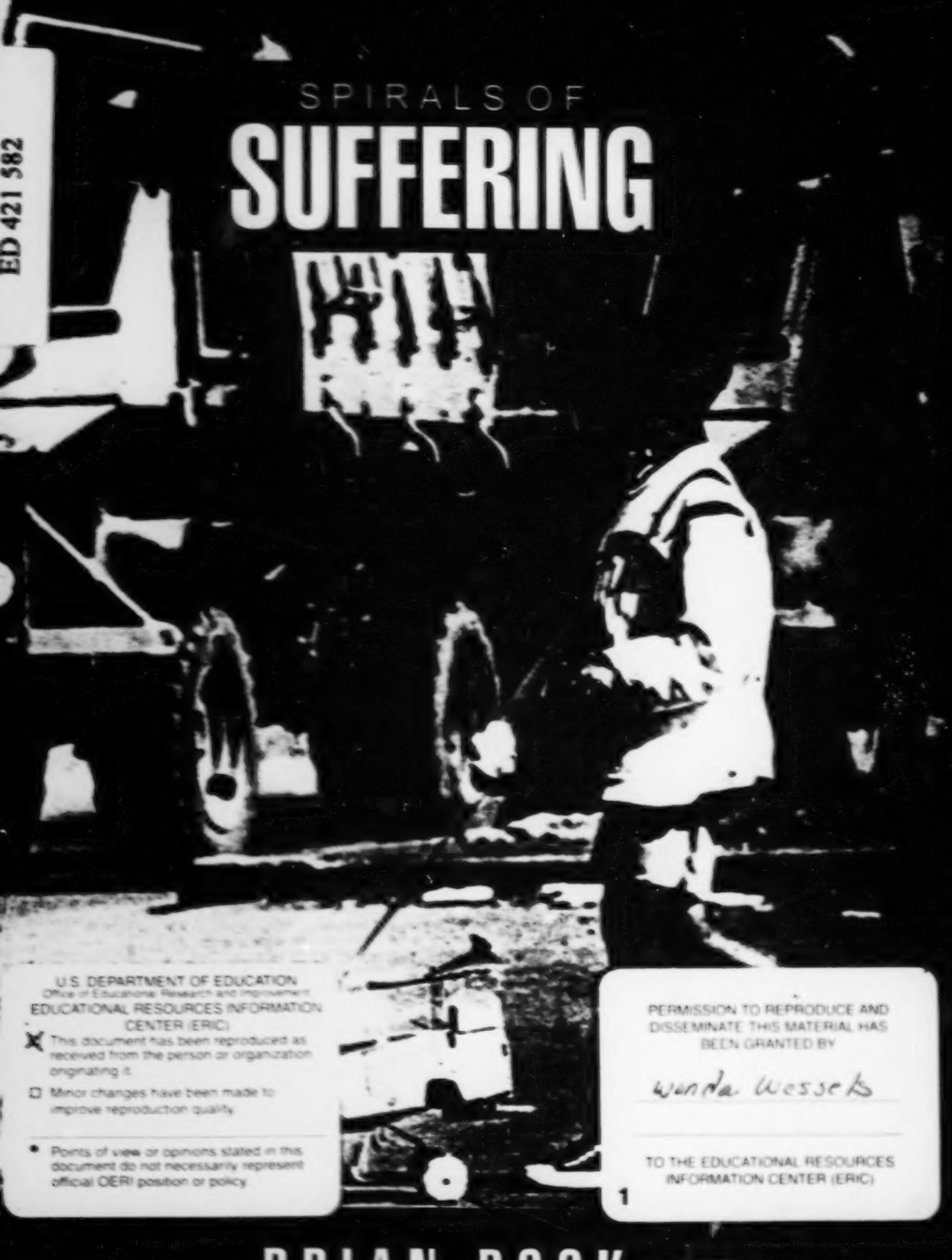

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SPIRALS OF SUFFERING:

Public violence and children

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BRIAN ROCK
Editor

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PRETORIA
1997

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Danny Chetty has been an indefatigable advocate for children's rights and, as the director of Practical Ministries in Port Shepstone, KwaZulu-Natal, he has worked tirelessly to help end violence. In recognition of his commitment and energy, Rev. Chetty has received many awards, including the prestigious Martin Luther King Award, for his efforts in addressing the plight of victims of violence. He has chaired the Peace Committee in Port Shepstone, and has published various articles on the effects of violence on women and children. In 1994 Rev. Chetty chaired the Advisory Panel for the Goldstone Commission's Inquiry into the Effects of Public Violence on Children.

Andy Dawes has done extensive research on the relationship between violence and the mental health of children in South Africa, and has published seminal works in this field and related areas. His most recent publication is the book *Childhood and adversity*, of which he is co-editor. Prof. Dawes has worked closely with international researchers, particularly from Northern Ireland and Mozambique, in the area of children and violence. He was a member of the Advisory Panel for the Goldstone Commission's Inquiry into the Effects of Public Violence on Children. He recently attended an international discussion group in Northern Ireland, as part of a small South African delegation, organised by Save the Children, UK.

Cosmas Desmond was born in London in 1935 and came to South Africa as a missionary priest 14 years later. He became politically involved as a result of the forced removals in 1967. Three years later, he published *Discarded people*. He was banned in 1971 and placed under house arrest for four years. During 1978, he published *Christians or capitalists?* and returned to England. One year later he took the position of director of Amnesty International British Section, which he held for two years. He published *Persecution East and West* in 1982, and returned to South Africa in 1991. He began working for the Children's Inquiry Trust in 1995, and has continued to be involved in the development of its publication, *Recovery*, since its closure in April 1996. Cosmas is engaged in freelance writing, research and editing.

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Anne McKay is a clinical psychologist and co-ordinator of the Durban office of the KwaZulu-Natal Programme for Survivors of Violence. She is involved in a wide range of areas relating to children and youth affected by violence. Presently, Ms McKay is conducting research into imprisonment of awaiting-trial juveniles for the Inter-Ministerial Committee on Young People at Risk, while doing voluntary work with perpetrators at Childline. Her interest in writing and communications has her facilitating media skills training for township youth organisations and trade unions, contributing to a publication for a church social justice agency and teaching English. She was previously involved in the co-ordination of peace monitors for the Peace Accord and the Network of Independent Monitors.

Sheila Miller, B.A. Hons (Rand) MACP, is currently case consultant for the Johannesburg Child and Parenting Centre, a member of the Good Start Project, and is in private practice. Before returning to South Africa, she worked as a consultant child psychotherapist at the Tavistock Clinic, London, and chaired the Association of Child Psychotherapists. Presently she is co-editor of *Extending horizons - psychoanalytic psychotherapy with children, adolescents and families.*

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Peter Newell is co-ordinator in the UK of the campaign EPOCH - End Physical Punishment of Children, and of EPOCH Worldwide, an international network of organisations sharing the same aim. In 1994 he was a member of the Advisory Panel for the Goldstone Commission's Inquiry into the Effects of Public Violence on children.

Raija-Leena Punamaki served as a member of the Advisory Panel for the Goldstone Commission's Inquiry into the Effects of Public Violence on Children. At the time, she was employed as a research psychologist at the University of Helsinki. She is a founding member of the organisation, Finnish Psychologists for Social Responsibility. Dr Punamaki has lived in the Middle East and has researched the effects of political violence on Palestinian and Israeli children. She has also published extensively.

Brian Rock trained as a clinical psychologist at the University of the Witwatersrand. Together with Norman Duncan, he worked for the Goldstone Commission's Inquiry into the Effects of Public Violence on Children, and co-authored the final report. Thereafter, he was appointed director of the Children's Inquiry Trust, a non-governmental organisation aimed at developing the work begun under the aegis of the Goldstone Commission, with Judge Goldstone as patron. The activities of this organisation included lobbying for widespread implementation of the Goldstone Commission recommendations and developing a multi-faceted resource centre for organisations and individuals working with children. He is a member of the Institute for Studies in Leadership and Authority and a registered chartered clinical psychologist with the British Psychological Society.

CONTENTS

Preface i

Foreword v

1. Introduction 1
   Brian Rock

SECTION I

2. Overview
   Norman Duncan & Brian Rock 31

3. Children and violence: Quantifying the damage
   Norman Duncan & Brian Rock 43
   The problem of definition 44
   Other obstacles to adequate quantification 47
   How much did children suffer under apartheid? 50
   Counter-violence and state repression 56
   Violence in the community 62

4. Going beyond the statistics
   Norman Duncan & Brian Rock 69
   Children under apartheid 69
   Children and state repression 86
   Children and community violence 94
   Mediating factors 104
   Conclusion 111

5. Survey of organisations providing services to children
   Norman Duncan & Brian Rock 115
   Survey findings 115
   Shortcomings of the survey 126

6. Inquiry recommendations

Norman Duncan & Brian Rock 129
Reactive strategies 129
Proactive strategies 134
Research needed 136
Proposed plan: National Interventions Programme 137
Conclusion 140

7. Advisory Panel recommendations 141
Introduction 141
Aims 143
Principles 144
Recommendations 147
Practical interventions 155
Section I: References 168

SECTION II

8. Assessing the impact of violence on children

Peter Newell 181
Consensus on the roots of violence 183
Routine violence: corporal punishment 186
The situation in South Africa 195

9. Being human vs having human rights

Cosmas Desmond 203
Human rights and harsh realities 206
Being human vs having human rights 208
Underlying assumptions 209
"The system" and change 214
Individual human rights: a contradiction 216
A genuine human rights culture 221
Conclusion 224

10. Post-traumatic stress in children: presentation and intervention guidelines
Gill Eagle & Catherine Michelson 227
General considerations in understanding traumatised children 229
The presentation of traumatic stress in children 231
Intervention guidelines 235
Models of intervention 240
Strategies of intervention 244
Case study 245
Conclusion 251

11. Working with traumatised children: a community project
Sheila Miller 255
Introduction 255
Theoretical underpinnings 257
Freeing the group to speak 261
The work discussion group 268
Reviewing the contract 269
The way forward: the Good Start Project 273

12. The survivors of apartheid and political violence in KwaZulu-Natal
Anne McKay 277
A spiral of suffering 280
Trauma as a focus point 291
Treatment of trauma 294
Case study 304
Issues 308
Conclusion 317

Appendix: Resource contacts 321

List of Acronyms 325

PREFACE

South Africa has emerged from an oppressive history to claim its long overdue democratic birthright. Despite the tremendous obstacles that have been overcome in the process of securing a Government of National Unity focused on reconciliation, most South Africans have experienced traumatic incidents and have faced inordinate levels of victimisation. Without sustained attention this legacy may seriously jeopardise the capacity to negotiate the challenges of reconstruction and development that lie ahead. Often it is the children who, given their dependence and vulnerability, are in most need of attention. Ironically, it is their innate potential that will help realise the aspirations of peace and stability. Unfortunately, as in many other societies, children's issues are not given top priority. In a country like South Africa, where children and youth constitute most of the population, it is vital that the needs of children and youth affected by the unrelenting violence in South Africa be taken seriously, which requires perforce that these issues be given energy and unwavering commitment.

In its 1988 report, *Voiceless victims: The impact of political violence on women and children*, the National Children's Rights Committee stated that to [most children in this country] there has never been a day without violence, without the police casspirs, funerals, stayaways and more recently the [intra-community] killings and destruction. It was doubtless with this in mind that, with the support of UNICEF and several non-governmental organisations, they requested that Judge Goldstone conduct an inquiry focusing on the effects of political violence on children. Following an intensive six-month process, recommendations were set out within a report co-authored by the then inquiry director, Dr Norman Duncan, and myself, and within a shorter report compiled by members of an Advisory Panel.

The idea for this book was conceived shortly after this inquiry ended. Beyond the wish to make both the report and the Advisory Panel's recommendations available to a wider audience, *Spirals of suffering* was compiled to widen the lens looking at these important issues. During the inquiry, it became evident that children were witnessing and being exposed to violence in other, perhaps less visible, areas: in their homes, in their relationships with adults and peers, in their schools, etc. Within the report, concern was expressed at maintaining too rigid a distinction between overt political acts of violence and other forms of violence. By incorporating contributions from a number of other authors with varied experience and involvement in children's issues, this book provides an extension of this view.

The lives of children provide an ongoing focus for people's concern about the hope for the future. In a world that continues to experience countless wars, violent atrocities, poverty and social malaise, there is often little to feel positive about. As conflict subsides in one part of the world, it seems to flare up in another. Children perhaps offer us some hope that things can be different for the next generation, if something can be done for them now. We, the adults, may not reap the immediate benefits, but the spirit of the younger generation can be used to create a world more in keeping with what we would have wished for ourselves, what we may have wanted to do differently - a world without wars, without thoughtless violence, without hatred. Children can be burdened by the onerous responsibility placed on them to turn our jaded dreams into prosperous, hopeful realities - like the child who carries the unfulfilled aspirations of an unhappy parent. Yet children and youth have played, and indeed continue to play, a leading role in the unfolding drama that is South Africa - past, present and future.

Theirs is a story of survival, terror, endurance, resilience, hope, despair, and most of all courage.

Beyond the Goldstone Commission's inquiry, this book has been informed by two seemingly disparate experiences. First, the signing and subsequent ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child in July 1995; and second, contact with teachers, social workers, child care workers, police, parents, carers, *et al.* during my work with the Children's Inquiry Trust, a non-governmental organisation aimed at lobbying for the implementation of the Goldstone Commission's recommendations and developing a multi-faceted resource centre for organisations and individuals working with children.

Unfortunately, owing to an inability to secure ongoing funding, the Children's Inquiry Trust closed its doors in May 1996. Many of its functions, especially its resource database and publication, are being continued within several provinces (refer to the Resource Contacts in the Appendix). This, together with the closure of the Goldstone Commission, makes *Spirals of suffering* an important prospect - it not only ensures that the ideas generated in a fairly intensive, unique process are kept within circulation, to be further digested, discussed and developed, but hopefully provides further contributions that offer food for thought for the challenges ahead.

I owe a debt of gratitude to many people who assisted in the publication of this book. If anything, it reflects a diverse range of ideas developed by many others who have a commitment to thinking about children of different ages in different settings. My thanks to them all, too numerous to be named individually, for the solid foundation upon which this book rests. There are a number of more easily identifiable people who have shaped my thoughts and supported my efforts enormously: Judge Richard Goldstone, the late Mr John Rees, Mrs Irene Menell, Bishop Peter Storey, Rev. Mvume Dandala, Mrs Sally Motlana, Justice Fikile Bam, Mr Raymond

Tucker, and Mrs Natalie Gordon. My thanks to Dr Norman Duncan whose experience and indefatigable commitment guided and, indeed, ensured the success of our efforts during the Goldstone Commission's inquiry. I am especially grateful to the contributors for their hard work and perseverance. Each one made a personal commitment to this project against the tide of other work commitments and responsibilities. In reflecting an array of ideas and experiences for working with children and youth, their chapters not only provide the reader with a rich tapestry of possibilities in their relationships, both personal and professional, with children and youth but also make these accessible, increasing the likelihood of their being directly useful. Special mention to Judy Morgan, Cosmas Desmond and the staff of the CIT: Maureen Mosselsohn, Eunice Mtwa, Pamela Mtwa, Zoleka Ntabeni. My sincere thanks to the following friends who were always available to discuss my ideas and concerns and make valuable contributions to numerous drafts of my introductory chapter: Paul Annecke, Andrew Eagle, Stan and Shirley Henen, Elan Hoffman, Ilana Korber, Rea Simigiannis. By providing missing references, Megan Virtue helped bridge the geographical divide between London and South Africa while this manuscript was in preparation. To Malbak and JCI for making funds available for this publication. Thank you to Mark Shaw for generously sharing his views and information on the Goldstone Commission and to Martin Terre Blanche for his assistance with the organisational survey and its interpretation. Last, and by no means least, a special thanks to my publisher, Claudia Davidson, who with wisdom and patience ensured a truly collaborative venture.

Brian Rock
February, 1997

FOREWORD

In situations of violence and unrest the most traumatised and damaged section of the population is always its most vulnerable and its most innocent - the children. A recent report published by UNICEF refers to 149 major wars between 1945 and 1992 - conflicts between or within nations. During the last ten years alone, 2 million children have been killed, 4 to 5 million have been disabled, 12 million left homeless, and 10 million left psychologically traumatised. More than a million have been orphaned or separated from their parents. The report also notes that children have frequently been conscripted for combat at a young age, and are forced to commit atrocities or witness brutalities committed upon their families or communities. Girls have frequently been sexually assaulted.

South African children have not been spared many of these horrendous experiences. Apartheid, and racial oppression over centuries in our country, have taken a terrible toll. It will take many generations and purposeful endeavour to eradicate the effects of the trauma.

The effects of political violence and intimidation in South Africa during the early 90s soon became obvious to those of us working in the Goldstone Commission. We became aware at first hand not only of the direct consequences for children of violence in black communities, but also of the indirect effect upon their lives. We became aware of their recruitment in informal organisations, some of them designed to fight against the violence itself, and others, unfortunately, to foment violence.

The commission was obviously precluded by lack of sufficient human and material resources from investigating every incident of violence reported to it. It had to prioritise, as best as it could, those which deserved special attention. It was with a feeling of relief and achievement that the commission was able to launch an inquiry into the effects of violence on children as its last official inquiry. It was gratifying and inspiring that all the relevant international and national NGOs gave their enthusiastic support to the inquiry. They unanimously appointed the late Mr John Rees as the chairperson of the Steering Committee. His leadership, advice and support were crucial to the success of the venture. His untimely death deprived the country of an important resource.

I warmly welcome this publication. It is appropriate that in addressing the subject of children and violence the subject of human rights in general should also be addressed. The main beneficiaries of a human rights culture in any society are its children. It is they who will benefit from an education free of dogma and repression. It is they who will grow up with the confidence that comes from knowledge gained in an atmosphere of free inquiry and without fear. In South Africa there are too many adults who have been victimised and who will never be able to throw off the mental shackles which they have inherited or which were thrust upon them - whether by inferior education or the myriad other evils of a system predicated upon racial discrimination. Their parents will, however, be able to appreciate in their children the benefits which we, as South Africans, will have in consequence of being able to live in a society in which the law can be respected and embraced by each and every citizen.

As a society we owe it to our children to ensure that never again will South Africans be subjected to oppression by the law. Without the knowledge of what occurred in the years of oppression those children will be deprived of an essential part of the history of their people. Collective guilt will attach to whites or to Afrikaners or to Zulus or to Asians. That, too, would be an unfortunate and even dangerous legacy to leave to our children. An indispensable ingredient of justice is the acknowledgement of victimisation - whether of individuals or of groups. Where there have been systematic human rights abuses, this acknowledgement is all the more necessary. That is the importance of bringing justice to the people of the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda. It is also the importance of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa.

In welcoming this publication, I would like to express my deep appreciation to Brian Rock, the first director of the Children's Inquiry Trust. His remarkable dedication and enthusiasm were indispensable in ensuring the success of the venture. May I also express my gratitude to the contributors who have written chapters for this publication.

Richard J. Goldstone
February, 1997

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Brian Rock

> Appeals to the past are among the commonest of strategies in interpretations of the present. What animates such appeals is not only disagreement about what happened in the past and what the past was, but uncertainty about whether the past really is past, over and concluded, or whether it continues, albeit in different forms, perhaps. This problem animates all sorts of discussions - about influence, about blame and judgment, about present actualities and future priorities.
>
> (Edward W. Said *Culture and imperialism*)

Almost three years have passed since all South Africans had the opportunity to vote in the watershed elections of 1994. Most of the world stood in awe, hailing as a miraculous occurrence the seemingly effortless move from a country ruled by a right-wing dictatorship — mainly benefiting the small white minority of the population — to one rapidly becoming a model of peaceful change for the rest of the world. In his book, *Peace and its discontents*, Edward Said holds up these changes as an example of how resourceful and successful a negotiated transfer of power can be (Said, 1995), considered even more impressive when compared with the continuing intransigence and impasse in the Middle East and Northern Ireland.

However hackneyed, the term "new South Africa" reflects these developments and suggests the birth of another country — different from its previous incarnation in numerous, important ways. Yet, for many, the new is little different from the old. For one, the violence endured historically continues, albeit in different forms, within society. Although Gauteng's Minister of Safety and Security, Jessie Duarte, announced toward the end of 1995 that political violence in Gauteng existed only as a memory, it still wreaks havoc in KwaZulu-Natal — a province racked by violent political confrontations — killing many and displacing families and whole communities.

Violence defies categorisation. There is no escaping that South Africa is considered to be among the most violent countries in the world. Media reports alert one daily to the countless occurrences of rape, fraud, murder, gang warfare, police corruption, physical and sexual abuse, and a range of other incidents which are increasingly prevalent and whose effects are widely felt. Most people, if they have not experienced violence directly, know of family and friends who have.

One view is consistently stated throughout this book — especially Section 1: that the state of South African society today is a direct consequence of the tyranny of apartheid with its origins in colonial rule beginning centuries ago; and two generations, let alone three years, are needed to right the wrongs it fomented and perpetuated. These are graphically conveyed by Brittain (1988):

> Black Africa has been deformed by Apartheid — its vitality weakened and wasted. Its connection to the rest of the world has dwindled as its shadow grows smaller and takes up less space in international concerns. The white regime in South Africa in its struggle to survive has, over the last decade and more, spread death, economic destruction, starvation and division across the African continent, brazenly piling horror and illegality so high upon each other that the rest of the world has lacked an adequate vocabulary of outrage. (p. 1)

Yet the factors that lead to, perpetuate and maintain violence are neither easily fathomed nor easily reversed. And while recognition of apartheid's grisly shadow and acknowledgment of the pain, suffering, humiliation and degradation it caused is of the utmost importance, this alone cannot stem the rising tide of violence.

In moving from the past to a present (and future) replete with new possibilities, the past must be faced. The Goldstone Commission was — as is the contemporary Truth and Reconciliation Commission — in part designed to bridge the divide between the different histories of life under apartheid by unearthing the truth of what happened. This chapter's leading quote is most helpful. Although Said (1993) separates the role of disagreement about the past and uncertainty about whether the past is over, in my view they are linked. The extent of the former will influence the latter. In other words, the past cannot be left in the past when vast disagreements about the past have occurred and, in the case of South African society, still remain; especially when in South Africa, as in other instances of societal oppression, history has been distorted and selectively conveyed to maintain and indeed deepen social inequities.

In the subsequent section of this chapter, I will explore one aspect of this distortion: how the Nationalist government isolated and used its version of African tribal life and heritage to further its own duplicitous ends. This will lead into a broader discussion of the apartheid system and a brief historical sketch taking us into the transition from the old ways to a new beginning in 1990, and culminating with the establishment of the Goldstone Commission of Inquiry. The last part of the chapter will describe and elucidate the contents of the remainder of *Spirals of suffering*, focusing specifically on two main themes of the book: the development of a human rights culture in South Africa and its advantages and potential disadvantages for children, and for traumatised children in particular.

Deception

The extent to which black[1] South Africans were treated as if they did not matter is disturbingly conveyed in a publication entitled *The two South Africas* published by the Human Rights Commission in August 1992 (HRC, 1992). This publication sought to show how geographical descriptions have reflected, by their gross omissions, the reality of life for most South Africans. By focusing on the then standard map of South Africa, which did not reflect — and still may not — where most South Africans live, the authors made plain the harsh realities of life under apartheid. Without markings for so-called black villages, towns, and cities, like the populous Khayelitsha or Mamelodi (among many others), the divide between an established "white" infrastructure and its seemingly invisible shadow, black South Africa, becomes all too conspicuous.

Yet it is not only omissions that were used as the thin end of a wedge to split and sever the population. Gross misinterpretations and active deception abounded. And although accounts of history are never entirely dispassionate and objective, these biases were founded upon the sinking sand of prejudice, which in turn took root in the soil of preceding colonial influences. One specific example is the Nationalists' misconception of African tribalism. The term "tribe" was particularly prevalent in the period leading up to the 1960s, which corresponded with that in which the term "race" was held to be of great significance in South Africa, the two terms being closely linked in both official circles and public perceptions (Skalnik, 1988). Quite simply, "race" provided the broad divisions of the country's population, whereas "tribe" delineated the subdivisions within the African race itself.

Although contemporary research has shown that the early African population did consist of culturally and linguistically homogeneous units, this does not mean that these remained unchanged or that the boundaries they created necessarily coincided with rigid, inflexible political loyalties. Different languages were spoken in the subcontinent, there were differences in custom, and people were grouped into different political entities represented by a series of states and chiefdoms that varied in both internal organisation and geographical location.

Thus, to diminish the importance of intergroup and intertribal relationships and constellations in the early life of South African history (prior to the arrival of the Settlers) is to perpetuate many unfounded beliefs. Equally, to overlook the importance of tribal affiliations today, especially within the province of KwaZulu-Natal, and the way these establish personal identity and a sense of belonging is to risk oversimplifying our understanding of present day difficulties.

Prejudice of every kind relies on some form of essentialism. Within this perspective, there is no room for the consideration of differences between the individuals *within* any group or, more importantly, of similarities shared by individuals *across* groups. The irony is that, if tribalism broadly refers to "the solidarity and common loyalties of people who share among themselves a country and a culture" (Davidson, 1992, p. 11), then its aims, to create a civil, ordered society dependent on the sharing of certain conventions and codes are no different from the "nationalism" upon which Afrikaner nationalism was founded. However, through the perversion of the function of tribes, by overemphasising its influence rather than placing it within a range of other more plausible explanatory factors, the Nationalist government provided fertile terrain for the perpetuation of much discrimination and prejudice.

Although the original usage of "tribe" in early historical times was not derogatory, during the apartheid years it came to signify what was primitive, traditional, savage and backward (Skalnik, 1988). Apartheid was founded and indeed maintained by a steadfast focus on the supposed differences between whites and blacks. The Nationalists' concept of "tribe" supported this idea: that the human population could have been divided into two broad categories — those who were "tribal" and those who were not. Implicit in this distinction was the belief that members of the former category represented a group of people located at an earlier stage in human social evolution, when people belonged to "tribes" and not modern nations. Nowhere else was the pejorative view of blacks more prevalent, with the attendant view of whites as sophisticates battling to turn the "uncivilized" tide. Moreover, tribal identities were regarded as ancient and powerful, causing animosity and tension to arise whenever and wherever members of different tribes came into contact (Skalnik, 1988).

Thus, any outbreak of violence was often explained in terms of tribal faction-fighting, thereby neglecting more inclusive explanations for its occurrence. Presently, political violence continues in the province of KwaZulu-Natal. While many attribute its causes solely to political conflict between the ANC and the IFP — the supposed modern-day equivalent of tribal conflict — the reasons are varied and complex. In the wake of yet another massacre in the southern coastal region of KwaZulu-Natal, in Shobashobane, Adrian Hadland in a detailed article in *The Sunday Independent* concludes that:

> ... the continuing deaths are about a frail judicial and law-enforcement system battling to assert neutrality and efficiency. They are about a national constitutional impasse and a lack of genuine will from political leaders — national, provincial and local — to merge traditional systems of leadership with democracy and

> tolerance... The murders are about underlying socio-economic conditions of poverty, unemployment and a lack of resources and development. And they are about the age-old tensions between city and countryside, and between youth and elders.

In view of the above, it is important to remain sensitive to the reading of history. One way in which Nationalist ideologies were propagated, for example, was by teaching a particular, self-serving view of South African history in schools, which has informed the still widely held assumption, primarily by white observers, that every African belongs to a certain "tribe".

Apartheid

The idea that the human population could be readily divided into a number of relatively discrete and stable groups, each with unique physical, intellectual and cultural characteristics, gained widespread acceptance during the colonial era in the nineteenth century (Boonzaier, 1988). It provided the European Settlers with an expedient method of explaining a wide range of social differences in an attempt to justify their own superior position and exploitative behaviour. This is consistent with several theoretical approaches to racism, which maintain that prejudice is a social attitude perpetuated to maintain and justify the advantaged position of the dominant class. The resultant control over the "subordinate" group is of primary importance and is characterised by the demise of justice and egalitarianism. The justification for this control involves the careful construction of a set of social myths aimed at presenting the minority group as inferior and undeserving of full membership in the larger society.

By the end of the 19th century the cancerous beliefs of colonial superiority began to spread into a panoply of repressive laws — a prelude to the beginnings of the apartheid state in 1948. In the aftermath of the Second World War, at the very time the world was condemning the atrocities resulting from Hitler's supremacist philosophy, legislated racism was becoming firmly entrenched in South African thinking.

Despite the oft-heard self-justificatory statements claiming the benign intentions of its creation, the web of proscriptive laws girding the apartheid machinery was nothing less than pernicious in design and harmful in consequence. As with the underlying beliefs of imperialism, apartheid was rooted in a so-called moral imperative. While imperialism sought the extension of national boundaries and the concomitant acquisition of wealth and power, it also hoped to extend the centres of so-called civilisation into the darkest reaches of the world, converting "savagery", "primitiveness" and "bestiality" into "morality", "civility" and "society". Apartheid divided groups and actively developed the interests and resources of one group at the expense — even demise — of others. In this sense, apartheid represented a less hopeful, though equally patronising and derogatory position. Contact between groups, in the minds of the Nationalists, was perilous and to be avoided at all costs: accordingly the enactment of the Group Areas Act prevented blacks from owning property and living in the same areas as whites; the migratory labour system ensured that this did not diminish the availability of an easily exploitable work force; and the creation of homelands — bantustans — acted as repositories for unwanted black people for whom the government could deny responsibility.

Apartheid was an inherently violent and alienating system for the majority of its citizenry: it deliberately broke up families through the migratory labour system and influx control laws; it destroyed whole communities through its programme of forced removals — which were often carried out at gunpoint; it brutally suppressed any suggestion of dissent, even resorting to the cold-blooded slaughter of women and children; it killed countless children through starvation and the lack of adequate health care; and it deprived millions further of a proper education.

Indeed, education had been both a casualty of, and a catalyst for, conflict in South Africa. The introduction of the separate, and decidedly unequal, Bantu Education system in the 1950s occasioned massive resistance and remained a cause of deep resentment until it triggered the Soweto uprising in 1976. While education, specifically the imposition of Afrikaans — the "language of the oppressor" — as a medium of instruction, was the immediate cause of that uprising, the young people were already angry because of the humiliation heaped upon their parents by the apartheid system and by their parents' apparent inability to resist.

Ultimately it was the disaffection with the iniquities of the educational system that — as a symptom of a broader, deeper malcontent — served as a catalyst for events that would diminish and eventually eradicate the Nationalists' power base (Lawrence, 1994). Though it was also an expression of real grievances,[2] and real suffering followed such actions in the wake of stepped-up state retaliation, the Soweto riots of 1976 mobilised and stimulated international and domestic opposition that would, over the next 14 years, lead to the then State President F.W. de Klerk's fateful speech on February 2. But this was not without grave costs.

From 1976 onwards the overt use of physical and psychological violence virtually became official government policy. The perceived "total onslaught" by the liberation forces was met by a "total strategy" which included the occupation of the townships by the army, the orchestration of state violence through the use of officially sanctioned hit squads and various other "dirty tricks" campaigns.

On the other hand,

> ... resistance movements legitimised and popularised violence as an appropriate means of attaining change ... violence became a socially sanctioned mechanism for resolving conflict.
>
> In a society as thoroughly politicised as South Africa, this style of politics inevitably "spills over" into other dimensions of society as people seek to resolve their social, economic and domestic problems and disputes. It is as a result of the consequent excessive social, political, criminal and domestic violence in South African society, that it has become possible to talk of a "culture of violence". (Simpson, 1993, p. 4)

The increased stranglehold by the state, as a consequence of the resistance from the liberation movements, had serious ramifications. In the aftermath of the Soweto riots, the government sought to silence the vociferous cry for freedom by detaining black political leaders; many others fled the country for fear of state reprisals. Although the ranks of the ANC based outside the country swelled, a serious vacuum was left within. More children and youth stepped into the political arena and began to assume positions of leadership, for which many were not adequately prepared. In many respects, they took the lead.

Alternative educational structures were created where small groups of children and adolescents would discuss Marxism and socialism - an education in the "curriculum of resistance". With the benefit of hindsight, it seems unfortunate that they chose to put "Liberation before education", so school buildings became "sites of struggle"; as symbols of oppression they were even physically destroyed. This possibly fuelled the struggle but it meant that children who had already been subjected to an inferior education system were then, for long periods, denied any education at all.

In the 1980s, the leadership by "the youth" was characterised by the staging of civic courts in which "appropriate" punishments were meted out to those, usually older members of the community, who chose not to participate in economic boycotts and stayaways. Such "transgressions" were frequently met with extremely violent punishments: lashings and "necklacings" — a tyre was placed around the neck of the accused, doused with petrol and lit, burning the victim to death. An illustration of the typical workings of these courts was given by Kane-Berman (1993):

> [F]our men between the ages of 34 and 63 were hauled in front of a 'people's court' at three o'clock in the morning in Soweto after ignoring a stayaway call which they had been told was optional. They were sentenced to 500 lashes each, stripped naked in front of ten-year-olds, spreadeagled over a drum, and flogged. Some people who did not support the stayaway had their ears cut off. (p. 34)

A military structure of organised resistance developed, which included "Generals" who were as young as 13 years of age. One child in particular, Stompie Mokhetsi, who commanded "armies" of self-defence units of 1 400 soldiers, personified the growing breed of young militants. Their activities were targeted at the state and its "puppets" within the townships, "vigilantes" who represented the conservative opposition in the communities. They engaged in night patrols, erected and guarded blockades, embarked upon intimidation and extortion campaigns, and issued death threats, which in many instances left the residents of certain communities isolated and helpless. What was perhaps most tragic about these developments was their reflection of a growing war between the people who were supposedly on the same side. In years to come this type of violence would develop into hostel attacks, train commuter violence by mysterious hit squads, and taxi violence in Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal, among others.

Transition and peace

> This is the first time in 78 years that a truly serious meeting takes place between delegations of the ANC and the succession of white governments that have ruled our country. It indicates the deadly weight of the terrible tradition of a dialogue between master and servant which we seek to overcome.
>
> (Nelson Mandela — The first formal meeting between the Nationalist government and the ANC — 4 May 1990)

Against the backdrop of violence during the remaining years of the 1970s and through the entire 1980s, the steps taken to negotiate the transfer of power were remarkable, instilling hope that levels of violence would decrease dramatically. On February 2, 1990 President F.W. de Klerk announced the unbanning of key organisations, most notably the ANC, PAC and SACP, their leaders were released from prisons, and intentions to negotiate an inclusive democracy were expressed.[3] May and August of that year saw the fruits of formal discussions between the ANC and the Nationalist government in the Groote Schuur Minute and the Pretoria Minute, securing the release of political prisoners and the return of exiles.

Contrary to an expectation that such negotiations would reduce the levels of violence dramatically, the number of deaths resulting from violent incidents increased.[4] According to Kane-Berman (1993), of the 15 843 fatalities that had resulted from political violence since September 1983 almost two-thirds had been since the beginning of 1990.[5] Various explanations were sought for the bloodletting, ranging from poverty to vested interests in having the negotiations fail, but, as Shaw (1994a) highlights, the country was in the throes of profound change. Perhaps the fact that the transition was being effected through dialogue and negotiation obscured how profound these changes were. Prior to 1990, few believed that change would begin to happen as early as it did or in the manner it did. That people's worst fears about such a change were never realised — though thousands died, were injured, and lost their homes — did not detract from the seismic shifts that were taking place.

During the next four years the country would remain in a twilight zone, untethered from the never-ending prospect of oppression but not yet firmly grounded within the vision of a democratic, peaceful future. The need for an interim measure, a stop-gap, to curb the escalating violence became all-important: "as society hovered between the old state and the new, institutions broke down, police and soldiers were no longer sure to whom they were responsible and what they were meant to do, and the courts became ineffective vehicles of discipline" (Shaw, 1994a, p. 184).

The National Peace Accord was to be the necessary interim measure. It set itself two objectives: the creation of peace in the country by reducing the levels of political violence, and assistance with the social development of the country.[6] The principles underlying the accord aimed at a smooth transition toward democracy which it recognised as "impossible in a climate of violence, intimidation and fear" (National Peace Accord, Chapter 1, p. 5) — principles that underscored its impermanence. Earlier in the year of the signing of the accord, President F.W. de Klerk enacted the Prevention of Public Violence and Intimidation Act, No. 139 of 1991, allowing for the establishment of a judicial commission of enquiry that would examine incidents of violence. However, the momentum behind the accord usurped its establishment in this form, linking it rather to the proposed peace structures as an investigative unit, predicated on the assumption that "violence and intimidation declines when it is investigated and when the background for it is exposed and given media attention" (National Peace Accord, Chapter 6, p. 22). With hindsight, this association bestowed more credibility on both endeavours: the Goldstone Commission[7] — with Justice Richard Goldstone at the helm — formed the linchpin of the National Peace Accord; and the accord in turn gave the commission a credibility it may not otherwise have enjoyed had it remained linked with the old government.

Children

Three years after its inception, the commission closed its doors on 27 October 1994, almost three months after the completion of its final inquiry. In many ways, this inquiry differed, in process and focus, from the many other inquiries that had resulted in the compilation of 46 reports. It was less legalistically formulated, drew mainly on outside expertise, and focused on issues of long-term concern (Shaw, 1994b). Indeed, this last inquiry was particularly significant, as it sought to draw attention to an area that, in the flurry of concern around political violence, had been largely neglected (ibid.): the effects of public violence on *children*.

Particularly since 1976, as Frank Chikane and others have noted, black children have been denied their right to a childhood and the freedom and security to behave as children, as a result of having to assume responsibilities far beyond their years. They led the "revolution" and were, to some extent at least, devoured by it. Some children *have* become accustomed to violence and committed to a life of crime. They too need special treatment, which is not to say that everything they do must be condoned; but they are in many ways the most unfortunate victims both of the system and of the struggle.

During the ultimate Goldstone Commission inquiry, the main objective was to compile an outline of the nature and extent of political violence involving children. Early on, it became very clear that so many children, in one way or another, had been exposed to some form of violence. Yet any quantification proved an impossible task. Any idea of the number of children affected by the socio-political developments in this country could only be, at best, an estimation.

Repressive governments thrive on misinformation. They are by definition opposed to full disclosure and against any form of scrutiny. Indeed, the clarity that open access to information would bring, like a flashlight in a dark corner, is deeply threatening to the very core of its workings. Systems designed to thwart information gathering and processing are built into the system as a self-protective mechanism. In South Africa, the statutory definitions of a child, for example, were tampered with to ensure that black children were prosecuted with the full force of the "law", when they should have been entitled to the same special protection in view of their age as their white counterparts. Furthermore, statistics were gathered in ways that seemingly diminished the extent of state actions against children. Children detained for longer than thirty days were recorded, whereas children detained for less time, regardless of how frequently, were not. Legislation was also deceptively named to mask its full implications. For example, The Extension of Universities Act sought to *limit* the number of universities available to black students.

Within its three-year life span, the Goldstone Commission investigated and underscored what for some was unbelievable, even — in their minds — deniable, yet for the vast majority it began to piece together fragments of experiences that were known only too well, the effects of which had been lived, felt and to some extent endured: a country torn apart by mistrust and fear, ravaged by violence on all levels. For many these experiences continue, in parts of KwaZulu-Natal, in the countless squatter camps and the underdeveloped townships; for others these live on as heartfelt memories of the not-too-distant past.

The recommendations made within the Goldstone Commission report and by the Advisory Panel benefited from the fact that it was to an ANC-led government that these were presented. The new dispensation was a willing "change-broker". In addition, these recommendations dovetailed the work of many organisations, most notably the National Children's Rights Committee and UNICEF, in their attempts to develop and implement a National Programme of Action (NPA) for children, which has seen the ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child in June 1995 and the establishment of a national steering group.

In the past eighteen months progress has been made. A special Inter-ministerial Committee on Young People at Risk has been charged with the task of reforming the juvenile justice system. The plight of children in prison has been forced into the spotlight. There are a great many non-governmental organisations providing support and developing innovative programmes for children: The Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation, Cape Town Child Welfare, the KwaZulu-Natal Programme for the Survivors of Violence, Practical Ministries, Pinetown Child Welfare, to mention several, and hundreds of other community-based organisations that require government support if they are to reach the many children in need of support. Legal reform for children and adolescents is receiving high priority through the work of organisations like the National Children's Rights Committee and the University of the Western Cape Law Centre.

Understandably, there is a great deal still to accomplish. For this reason, it is hoped that spirals of suffering will stimulate discussion, assisting and feed into a wide range of endeavours aimed at policy and service development for children.

Section One

This first section is intended to build on the work begun by the Goldstone Commission of Inquiry into the Effects of Public Violence on Children, and is an abridged version of the report produced at its conclusion. The first chapter of this section serves as an introduction and highlights some basic assumptions underpinning the original report in addition to its main findings and conclusions. The second chapter addresses the thorny issue of quantifying the extent to which children were involved and affected by political violence. A broad framework for defining political violence is presented. This is used later in the chapter for providing a qualitative description of some of the effects of political violence. Moving beyond an attempt to piece together the fragments of the statistical/epidemiological puzzle, the third chapter offers an exploration of four more general consequences of apartheid policy on child development, family life, education, and the individual. This chapter concludes with an examination of the various mediating factors which may play a role in the way children perceive and react to potentially traumatic incidents of violence.

Children cannot be left alone to deal with the aftermath of political violence, and an important part of the commission's work was to identify those organisations offering some support. An abridged version of that survey's findings are presented in the fourth chapter. The commission concluded its work with the recommendations made in the fifth chapter. These were the basis of in-depth discussions by a specially appointed Advisory Panel, which resulted in the more detailed recommendations found in the final chapter of this section.

Section Two

The second section makes further contributions to perceptions and understandings of children's involvement in the violence of this country and its effects, as well as providing descriptions of interventions that have proved useful.

The first two chapters of this section provide an interesting account of the development of children's rights in South Africa. Both chapters make reference to the ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, a recommendation made by the Advisory Panel – which followed on from the developments begun among NGOs, mentioned earlier.

In the first chapter of this section, *Peter Newell* argues that, if South African society is to rise above the legacy of apartheid and the consequent violence, the state and individuals must closely examine the sources of violent attitudes and actions, which remain deeply confused, especially in relation to children. His thesis focuses on corporal punishment but is applicable to other forms of violence. He explores how punitive discipline involving physical punishment and deliberate humiliation of children leads to the development of violent attitudes; and how ending the legal and social acceptance of physical punishment of children is a key strategy for reducing all forms of interpersonal violence. Based on scrutiny of the experience of other countries, Peter Newell discusses how South African society can embrace non-violent attitudes. A strong appeal is made for the development of a human rights culture, for the adoption of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and for a revision of all laws affecting children.

Cosmas Desmond, in the next chapter, argues that changing laws and ratifying conventions, however useful, will not necessarily bring about the desired change in society. To recognise that people have rights does not in itself compensate for what they suffered through their violation. Furthermore, he argues that by placing undue emphasis on a Bill of Rights that panders to more ethereal rights, such as the right to freedom of speech, when the most important right — to life — cannot be taken for granted, the needs of the majority are neglected in favour of those of the ruling elite. The role of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child is only one small step of *many* in the right direction. But subscription to the notion of human rights will not necessarily solve the problems of homelessness, poverty, unemployment, political violence, refugees etc. The violation of human rights is a symptom of a deeper malaise. Simply introducing a moralistic and legalistic concern for human rights may, on the surface, change the equation, but it does not necessarily lead to a just and social order in which all people are *treated* equally. According to Cosmas Desmond, that requires a more radical, revolutionary political programme leading to the development of a true human rights culture, based on a sense of community and a culture of caring — an acknowledgment of our interdependence.

Notwithstanding that the most crucial answer to apartheid is a radical restructuring of the political and economic institutions, the remaining chapters of Section Two focus on working with those children and adolescents who have been most visibly affected by the violence. "Trauma" is a term that, partly owing to its roots in North American psychiatry, is bandied about today with far too much abandon. There is a danger in seeing pathology in all exposures to violence and traumatic events. Many have, quite rightly, railed against what they see as a burgeoning "trauma industry" in which all experiences within conflict situations are reduced to the unidimensional focus, of trauma, as are efforts to deal with its consequences: individual counselling or psychotherapy.

Spirals of suffering is intended to counteract the tendency to downplay the effects of having lived in an oppressed society that has been ravaged by violence in various forms. Marie Langer, a psychoanalyst who devoted her life to the fight for political and social freedom in Spain, Argentina and Nicaragua, is exemplary in her efforts to integrate the social and the psychological. She not only took up the cudgels of resistance against some of the most oppressive governments in the world,[8] but as one of the coordinators of the Internationalist Team of Mental Health Workers spearheaded reforms to mental health services in Nicaragua and Cuba. Most pertinent to our discussion was her belief not only in the reconstruction of all political and social institutions but also in a commitment to the potential psychological problems that emerge *after* a revolution, which included, and extended beyond, post-traumatic stress disorders and traumatic neuroses (Langer, 1989).

According to Langer, during any political struggle there is little space for the recognition of individual loss and suffering. People are collectively united in their efforts to overcome the repressive regime. Comfort may be taken post-revolution in the knowledge that those who died did not die in vain; they died for realisable goals and ideals. However, the triumph of revolution, perhaps especially when achieved at least in later years by dialogue and discussion, does not automatically diminish psychological problems.

Her views may provide some insight into those children who became involved in the struggle, who took up arms against the state and whose lives were dramatically shaped by political developments. However welcoming they are of the "new South Africa", they must feel some sense of dislocation and a renewed struggle to fit in. We also cannot ignore those children who, as a result of their experiences, are unable to attend to their schoolwork in class, are inhibited in their relationships with friends and family, are prevented from participating in social activities due to their anxiety or aggression, and who have become withdrawn and isolated. These are part of the masses of children with "eyes eighty years old", as described by Johnson (1993, p. 122), who have witnessed a multitude of horrors:

> For every two, or six, or twenty-seven dead South Africans we read about each morning, it is chilling to consider how many more saw what happened, were related to those bodies, or were nodding acquaintances at the local cafe. Leave aside for a moment those who did it or had it done to them — think of all the others who are inescapably affected, forever (ibid., p. 123).

In the third chapter, *Gill Eagle* and *Catherine L. Michelson* provide an in-depth, considered discussion of those children who have been traumatised by their exposure to violence, though they acknowledge that the idea of trauma and traumatisation should not be invoked as an explanation for all reactions to violence and conflict. Their discussion takes account of the circumstances out of which Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder may develop and how the concept of Continuous Traumatic Stress has relevance for the South African situation. They provide a developmental account of the factors that may mediate or exacerbate a child's difficulties and explain the crucial role of the parent or caregiver's response. The case study of their work with a young girl and her mother is used to illustrate the two trauma models they describe, which highlights the importance of working within the wider family and community network.

The idea of working with people in their context is an important consideration within the South African situation. And although this should not rule out working with individuals when appropriate, it does combine well with an Africanist perspective, as described in Cosmas Desmond's earlier chapter. Once again, Marie Langer's (1989) reasons for emphasis on the group have significance for ways of working in South Africa:

> We work in groups, not only because in a society that desires the integral development of all, individual psychotherapeutic attention is insufficient, but because problems and mental suffering are generated in groups and it is in group situations that they can best be resolved. Group activity is in total accord with Nicaraguan ideology: *it strengthens solidarity and teaches people to view their pain in social terms and to alleviate it together* (p. 10, emphasis added).

Thus, the last two chapters of the section elaborate on the more communal aspects of interventions, taking their work into group settings — with staff of a child-care institution and township youth, respectively.

By describing the facilitation of a "work discussion" group, *Sheila Miller* underscores the importance of providing assistance for staff when thinking about the needs of individual children. By helping staff reflect on the experiences of a troubled young boy, a deeper understanding is reached of his "strange" behaviour and pre-occupations. This chapter describes the development of the "work discussion" group philosophy which began in the United Kingdom. By addressing the needs of carers, this chapter introduces an often neglected, albeit vital, aspect of work with traumatised and troubled children. Many of the staff showed enormous commitment and motivation in the face of their past and ongoing personal and social difficulties. Thus, the "work discussion" group was not only very useful for understanding one child's world in some depth, but it also helped the staff manage their own powerful feelings and thoughts — at times overwhelming and burdensome — and recognise the advantage of mobilising the support of their colleagues and friends.

In a similar vein, the fifth chapter shares a commitment to many of the concepts expressed in the preceding chapter. By sharing her project's work with township youth in some of the most difficult areas in KwaZulu-Natal, *Anne McKay* provides not only a very useful understanding of group processes and group work, but also a fascinating insight into the thoughts and feelings of people whose lives have been irrevocably shaped by apartheid. Their struggles, concerns, fears and hopes are brought to life by a powerful narrative — skilfully weaving theory and personal experience — that traverses a range of thought-provoking ideas, from trauma to reconstruction and development, and from individual pain to group healing. Toward the end of the chapter, Anne McKay opens the door on a highly-charged group encounter that highlights some of the most difficult, unspeakable elements within the transition today, and uses this to explore the very useful concept of loss of authority as the basis for many of the current problems in South African society.

ENDNOTES

1 Insofar as apartheid attempted to disadvantage non-white people – African, coloured, and Indian – the term "black" has been used throughout to denote those who have been most affected by apartheid policies and practices.

2 Under the apartheid government, the introduction of the Bantu Education system in the 1950s was hardly designed for the purpose of education: classes were overcrowded, teachers overstretched and often ill-trained; few resources were available for everyday demands, let alone specialised needs such as remedial education or psychological counselling; even general leisure and cultural activities were entirely lacking.

3 F.W. de Klerk's decision to engage in the process leading to meaningful change can be likened less to a congenial host opening the door to welcomed guests than to a pariah faced with the growing clamour of international outcry and internal resistance. See Lawrence (1994) for a deeper analysis of the more veiled motives behind the National Party's agenda when "initiating" the move toward a democratic system of governance.

4 Although the number of deaths and injuries increased dramatically from the seventies to the eighties, dramatic increases are reflected between the individual years of the nineties. Cognisance should be taken of the concomitant increase in the use of firearms, revolvers and automatic rifles during conflict. One publication in particular offers an excellent analysis of the events that unfolded from when negotiations began until the national elections 4 years later (cf. Friedman, S. & Atkinson, D. (eds) (1994). *South African Review 7: The small miracle: South Africa's negotiated settlement*).

5 Many complexities present themselves when attempting to understand the many factors underlying the violence that has occurred throughout the country. Patterns of violence in various regions have their root not only in the distortions and deformations that have

resulted from maintaining a divided country but from specific regional dynamics that operate. One relatively impervious form of violence, for example, is the gang violence in the Western Cape. Notwithstanding the poverty and lack of development such communities have had to face, other factors beyond social privations help to maintain such allegiances, including familial ties and ethnic loyalties.

6 The National Peace Accord was signed on September 14, 1991. Beyond a declaration of intent, it allowed for the establishment of a National Peace Committee, charged with the overall responsibility of ensuring that the principles of the accord were complied with and that disputes were resolved; a National Peace Secretariat, consisting of four people from the Peace Committee, one from the Department of Justice being responsible for the co-ordination of the various regional and local peace committees; and the Goldstone Commission of Inquiry.

7 The Goldstone Commission of Inquiry Regarding the Prevention of Public Violence and Intimidation held its inaugural meeting in Pretoria late October 1991. Its main objectives were to investigate the nature and causes of political violence, and to recommend measures capable of containing the cycle of violence and preventing further violence. On a broader level, the commission was empowered to initiate research programmes to further establish scientific empirical data on violence. Provision was made for individuals to approach the commission with requests for it to investigate any particular matter relevant to combating violence (National Peace Accord, Chapter 6, p. 23).

8 Marie Langer was forced to flee her mother country, Austria, following her involvement with the communist International Brigade. Years later she settled in Argentina and as a result of her political activities was forced into exile when she was targeted for assassination by the infamous right-wing death squad, the Argentinian Anti-Communist Alliance (Langer, 1989).

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SECTION 1

CHAPTER 2

■

OVERVIEW

Norman Duncan & Brian Rock

> If it is true that a people's wealth is its children, then South Africa is bitterly, tragically poor. If it is true that a nation's future is its children, we have no future, and deserve none.
>
> (Qoboza, in Bundy, 1992, p. 1)

The impact of direct exposure to public violence can take many forms. Apart from death, children may suffer loss of limbs or a range of other severe physical injuries. Notwithstanding the importance and significance of such injuries (and resulting hospitalisation) to children's lives, even children who emerge seemingly unscathed from such occurrences are highly predisposed to being affected by such incidents.

Several South African studies scrutinised during the course of the present inquiry indicate that children traumatised by public violence typically exhibit symptoms ranging from extreme anger, fear and shock to debilitating helplessness and despondency (Dawes, 1992; Dawes & Tredoux, 1990; Gibson, 1989; Smith & Holford, 1993). In one such study as many as 9% of the children sampled displayed serious conditions, ranging from Conduct Disorder to Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (Dawes & Tredoux, 1990). Given that many children frequently present with symptoms only several years after exposure to incidents of public violence, this figure is likely to be a conservative representation of the actual number of children severely traumatised by political violence in South Africa.

Most of the studies examined highlight that the more frequently children are exposed to acts of violence, the more likely it becomes for them to begin perpetrating acts of violence (Aysen & Nieuwoudt, 1992; Dawes & Tredoux, 1990; Hirshowitz et al., 1992; Klaasen, 1990; Malepa, 1990). Thus, a very thin line exists between being a victim of violence and beginning to commit violent acts oneself (Bundy, 1992). Indeed, several studies have detected an increasing trend highlighting the involvement of children and young adolescents as primary perpetrators in acts of public violence (cf. Bundy, 1992; Malepa, 1990). The large number of children implicated in the "necklacing" and murder of political opponents in recent years is a case in point (Straker & Moosa, 1990). Moreover, as a number of recent media reports and studies indicate, this phenomenon is not limited to black children and adolescents as many believe. In this regard, consider the much reported case of the young white adolescents who seriously injured a baby in a stoning incident, simply because she and her mother were black (Duncan, 1994; Hirshowitz et al., 1992; NCRC, 1994; Simpson, 1993).

Children need not be at the epicentre of public violence in order to be affected by it. The recent dramatic increase in the suicide rates among young adolescents from relatively "violence-free" white communities, coinciding as it does with the increases in the levels of public violence in this country, are very disturbing (cf. NCRC, 1994; Dawes & Finchelescu, 1993; Simpson, 1993).

Another important though less direct consideration affecting children during episodes of political violence is the compromising of services that should be available for their benefit, such as health and other social services. An extensive study recently undertaken by the National Children's Rights Committee (1994) in Natal and the Pretoria-Witwatersrand-Vereeniging area reveals the devastating impact of political violence on the provision of various social and health services directed at children. This has dramatically increased the already high morbidity and mortality rates among South African children, and has had extremely adverse effects on their psychological and social well-being. Schools catering for the majority of children in South Africa are often not in a position to provide much needed security and support for children. Indeed, many schools themselves are frequently the site of violence and intolerance (NCRC, 1994). A further factor to be considered is the traumatisation of health care workers and teachers who themselves have been in the eye of the storm. This often impedes their ability to intervene meaningfully in children's lives.

The Goldstone Commission: February - August 1994

On 11 September 1993 Judge Goldstone announced that the Goldstone Commission would undertake an inquiry into the effects of public violence and intimidation on children. UNICEF and the National Children's Rights Committee had drawn to the attention of the commission the plight of tens of thousands of children in South Africa in consequence of political violence and intimidation.

It called for submissions on, *inter alia,* the needs of such children, appropriate programmes to cater for those needs and sources of funding for such programmes. Helpful submissions were received from 18 organisations. It emerged that the problems are manifold and that the number of children involved runs to many tens of thousands.

On 25 November 1993 an informal meeting was held by the commission with interested parties and organisations. It was the unanimous view of the persons present that the commission should hold one or more inquiries relating to the abovementioned terms of reference and, to the extent relevant and appropriate, to seek the advice of South African and foreign experts. The organisations which were present at the informal meeting appointed representatives to serve on a working committee to advise the commission on the manner in which it should proceed with this inquiry. Assistance would come in the form of a Steering Committee.[1]

It was decided that the inquiry would establish the scope and specific nature of the problems faced by South African children aged 18 years and younger as a result of public/political violence in this country since 1976[2], and thereafter make recommendations relating to necessary crisis intervention as well as longer-term policy issues.

The process culminated with the presentation of a report to President Mandela on August 10, 1994, which was based on a thorough literature review of published and unpublished material from 1976 onwards; written submissions from individuals and organisations; regional meetings with key individuals and organisational representatives; and a postal survey of 280 organisations working with children.[3]

The findings confirmed the vast numbers of children exposed to violence in the political domain and highlighted the even greater number of those involved in other forms of violence, including criminal, domestic, economic and environmental violence. Of particular importance, the inquiry highlighted the erosion of social structures - health and social services, sites of learning, nuclear and extended family networks - seriously hampering the availability of support and care of children in crisis; and the lack of priority accorded children, reflecting their low status in South African society. This was found to be exacerbated by the limited resources available to, and co-ordination between, non-governmental organisations who, to a large degree, have borne the brunt of service delivery to disenfranchised communities.

Seventy per cent of the South African population consist of youth and children. Without reaching them, crucial ideals such as nation-building will remain lofty aspirations. Therefore, most of the individuals involved in the Goldstone Commission inquiry agreed that a six-month process would be hardly sufficient to address the range of issues regarding children and violence in any depth or with any long-term sustenance.

Two additional activities were organised to ensure that the report was not merely an academic exercise: the Advisory Panel and Strategic Working Forum.

The Advisory Panel: 23 - 26 September 1994

Six weeks following the completion of the inquiry, an Advisory Panel consisting of local and international specialists in the field deliberated on the report.[4] They were required to examine critically the set of recommendations contained within the Goldstone Commission. Their report is contained in Chapter 6 of Section 1. A smaller document with recommendations was generated as an adjunct to the Goldstone Commission document.

The Strategic Working Forum: 27 September 1994

Immediately thereafter a Strategic Working Forum was held in Johannesburg to discuss both reports. Three hundred participants attended from organisations throughout the country. At the conclusion of the day, the staff of what was to become the Children's Inquiry Trust made a commitment to distribute the Goldstone Commission and Advisory Panel reports and the proceedings of the forum. In addition, a commitment was made to host future forums in certain provinces to add to the process.

The Goldstone report

Before proceeding, it is important to state the assumptions upon which this report was based. Firstly, political violence has a negative effect on, or undermines, the optimal development and psychological well-being of children.[5] Here it needs to be noted that this position has been met with some caution in the past (cf. Swartz & Levett, 1989). The assumption that exposure to traumatic events always results in psychological debilitation and scarring can be counter-productive by unduly pathologising people. However, such cautionary views should be contextualised within the political era in which they were expressed, namely within the context of ongoing state repression. In this context, as Swartz and Levett (1989) highlight, the opportunity for mental health intervention was not to be embraced as a panacea for all ills but harboured the potential to inflict harm. For one, it often placed people in touch with their vulnerabilities at a time when their need to cope from day to day was paramount. The socio-political climate has changed dramatically. While taking cognisance of the above, it is the contention of the present writers that it would be prudent at this juncture to assume that political violence adversely affects children or at least hinders their optimal development (Simpson, 1993).

Secondly, the high levels of violence which have dominated the South African socio-political landscape are primarily a function of past and present political, social and economic policies, rather than of intra-individual factors as is frequently assumed (cf. Hirshowitz et al., 1992). Any efforts to ameliorate the effects of children's exposure to political violence will therefore only be effective if they are accompanied by socio-political transformation and economic reform.

Thirdly, children do not exist in a vacuum but rely on their relationships with other people and social structures for physical and emotional support. If these supports are in any way compromised, children suffer. Over the last decade alone, tens of thousands of children have suffered through the death[6] and traumatisation of family members, neighbours, friends, teachers, etc. The disruption or loss of emotional attachments which normally accompanies these traumatic events not only has debilitating consequences for the child's immediate psychological well-being but also for his/her later development (Setiloane, 1991). This is most apparent in the case of young children whose parents or primary caregivers are the victims of violence (Letlaka, 1990). For a number of reasons, the primary caregivers constitute the child's entire world. It is therefore understandable that events which separate children from their primary caregivers are disruptive to their development, particularly when such events are located within a context of ongoing stress and turmoil. Indeed, it is likely that children who lose their primary caregivers as a result of violence frequently experience difficulty in developing an orientation of trust towards others and the world at large.

Lastly, events and their consequences often snowball and impact upon each individual in unique, idiosyncratic ways. Despite every effort to present the data contained in the report logically and sequentially, it has to be remembered that this is seldom how events occur in real life.

Findings

Some of the most important findings contained in the report include:

☐ A large (and ever-increasing) number of children are affected by political violence and even greater numbers are affected by various other forms of violence, most notably domestic violence. More than anything else, the report underlines how the previous government not only neglected children but, through state-sanctioned practices, abused them. This is evident in the flagrant lack of care for and interest in the development of the majority of children; the lack of a coherent national surveillance system monitoring acts of violence against children; and the existing shortage - and lack of co-ordination - of resources and services aimed at assisting children affected by public violence.

☐ One of the more serious consequences of the high levels of violence in this country is that an increasing number of children are now perpetrating acts of violence themselves. This phenomenon is obviously linked to the lack of assistance and support given to children exposed to violence in South Africa.

In view of the above, the report recommended that a National Programme of Interventions be implemented. Such a programme would, among other things, include the ongoing monitoring of problems faced by children; the inter-sectoral co-ordination of energies in making children an important, ongoing priority would also make a crucial contribution. Indeed, anything less could result in further loss and destruction, and a future generation of adults who, because of the scars they bear, would be unable to contribute to, and feel part of, a New South Africa.

Way forward

While not overtly stated, the inquiry's findings are consistent with other initiatives already in place aimed at addressing the problems facing children, such as the National Programme of Action.

Conclusion

If in any way it aspires to future peace and prosperity, this country will have to come to terms with, and deal with, the iniquities of the past and present. Addressing the present plight and needs of children constitutes a crucial step in that direction. While a report of this nature cannot be the final word on violence and children, it is hoped that it will contribute to achieving these ideals.

ENDNOTES

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1. It consisted of the following ten members drawn from a diverse range of organisations - government departments, non-governmental organisations, university affiliates, welfare bodies - working with children affected by public violence: J. Rees (Chair) (Department of Welfare - Victims of Violence Fund: Avril Elizabeth Home), S. Cooper (The Family Institute), R. Phiyega (National Council for Child & Family Welfare), S. Mabusela (National Children's Rights Committee), C. Davidson / P. Cronje (South African Police), H. Mkhize (Children and Violence in South Africa Project), S. Kimaryo / J. Byarugaba / A. Rosvall (UNICEF), A. Butchart (Health Psychology Unit, UNISA), R. Fincham (Institute of Natural Resources), I. Menell / D. Titus (Institute for the Study of Public Violence).

2. Beyond its historical significance, 1976 was used as the starting point for the inquiry as it represents the time when children and adolescents began their most visible moments of involvement in the political strife of the country.

3. Several questionnaires were developed and sent to individuals and organisations. In their individual capacities, people were asked to notify the inquiry of any relevant work they had undertaken in this area and where possible to summarise their major findings. People working within various settings - monitoring agencies, child guidance clinics, hospitals, youth organisations, child welfare societies, schools and children's homes - were asked to provide a comprehensive picture of the impact of public violence on the livelihood of South African children; determine the nature and scope of services currently available to children affected by public violence; determine the need for such services; offer views on priorities and suggestions for improving these services; and describe how the needs of child victims of public violence could be best addressed.

4. The panel included the following members: R. Bhengu (Imbali Rehabilitation Centre), D. Chetty (Practical Ministries), A. Dawes (University of Cape Town), N. Nciza (National Children's Rights Committee), P. Newell (End Physical Punishment of Children, London), and R. Punamaki (University of Helsinki).

5. Consider here, for example, the countless studies illustrating how public violence increases the prevalence of malnutrition and disease and decreases access to social services; and the negative impact which these conditions have on children's psychological well-being (cf. Chikane, 1980; Simpson, 1993).

6. A recent report by the SA Institute of Race Relations (1994) reveals that over the last ten years, at least 19 000 South Africans lost their lives as a result of public violence.

CHAPTER 3

■

CHILDREN AND VIOLENCE: QUANTIFYING THE DAMAGE

Norman Duncan & Brian Rock

One of the primary tasks of the inquiry was to generate recommendations aimed at assisting South African children affected by public violence. Such an undertaking can only take place with an adequate quantification of the extent of the problems caused by public violence. Only when the nature and enormity of public violence is ascertained can intervention strategies be constructed and implemented in ways that are optimally beneficial to children. This is not simply to suggest that an awareness of the number of children exposed to violence, or a quantitative breakdown of the various contexts in which such violence occurs, should constitute the primary focus of research and/or action strategies. Nonetheless, this knowledge can serve as a firm basis for specifying the physical, psychological and social sequelae of exposure to violence, as well as developing appropriate intervention strategies which are sensitive to regional priorities.

Despite the importance of epidemiological information, a marked paucity of such information exists. It is presently almost impossible to compute how many hundreds of thousands of children were, and continue to be, affected by public violence (Bundy, 1992; NCRC, 1994). Nonetheless, it is a truism that children are affected by exposure to public violence. At this juncture it is becoming increasingly important to specify the circumstances that lead to traumatisation, the ways in which such traumatisation manifests itself, and the programmes which require implementation to ameliorate any problems.

Various documents and reports have attempted to quantify the effects of public violence comprehensively, yet the results have often been fragmented and incomplete. The aim of this chapter is to draw together these disparate pieces of what is often a confusing, vague puzzle. There are however many obstacles to achieving a comprehensive statistical and epidemiological analysis, not the very least being how the concepts "public violence" (or political violence, as it is most frequently termed) and "childhood" are defined, or in some cases not defined. The issue of definition will be discussed initially. Thereafter other problems typically faced by researchers will be discussed before detailing the levels of violence that have affected children and adolescents.

THE PROBLEM OF DEFINITION

What is public violence?

> The term [political violence] ... is currently used ... in South Africa to refer to such things as detentions, beatings, sexual abuse by authorities and so on. [However, it should also be seen as including] repression in more broad terms ... such as on-going class, race and gender inequalities which predate the current crisis in South Africa (Swartz & Levett, 1989, p. 746).

> [Political violence] would include any action, reaction or lack of action which fails to recognise the full rights to personhood of the other ... a discriminatory political system [would fall] into this category (Allwood, 1990, p. 2).

> Political violence forms part of and is therefore ... a sub-category of structural violence ... Here we refer both to acts committed by

> those who believe that existing laws are unjust, and acts committed by those who are required to defend and protect the status quo (Hirshowitz et al., 1992, p. 3).
>
> Public violence ... is multifaceted ... [and] it is ... situationally, culturally and historically relative (Frankel, 1993, p. 2).
>
> [Political violence includes] apartheid legislation ... [which] for decades was used as a repressive measure to contain the anger of struggling black masses ... [as well as] the current "alleged" destabilisation scenario (NCRC, 1994, p. 1).

These are just some of the definitions used. However, although these are at variance with one another in certain respects, public violence can be thought to include the following:

i. state oppression organised and perpetuated by means of legislation and government structures;

ii. the counter-violence embodied by attempts to challenge this oppression, as well as the subsequent repressive reactions by the state and its agents in the form of torture, murder, vigilante activities and detention without trial; and

iii. intra-community violence which may result from many factors, which may in most instances be linked to past apartheid practices.

These categories of public violence are indirectly reflected in the Prevention of Public Violence and Intimidation Act Number 139 of 1991, which defines public violence as those processes or actions "... whether or not committed, presumably committed or alleged to have been committed *to achieve any political aims*" (p. 73, author's italics). Such violence would include any actions (or series of actions) brought about intentionally or unintentionally by an individual or group (personally or on behalf of an institution) that are physically or psychologically injurious or violate the rights of another individual or group of individuals (cf. Hirshowitz et al., 1992). In other words, public violence would include acts of violence aimed both at opposing political inequality and at maintaining such inequality (cf. Hirshowitz et al., 1992; Mkhize, 1993), as well as other forms of violence which are the products of *political* factors.

Political violence is largely shaped by a particular socio-historical context (cf. Frankel, 1993). It includes the ongoing oppression and repression that has resulted in the social, economic and political marginalisation of certain groups of people in this country, as well as their response to such oppression and repression. The systematic dehumanisation of these groups has its roots in colonialism and has continued until the present (NCRC, 1994). While the Government of National Unity might herald an end to the oppression and repression which have characterised South African society thus far, the *effects* will be felt for many years to come.

Public vs other forms of violence

The focus of most news items dealing with public violence displayed on television or in the print media is sensationalistic. As a result, the media portrayal of public violence mostly involves "visible", physical acts of violence and has heightened the notion that violence is perpetrated by blacks against blacks (Duncan, 1994). However, public/political violence is more pervasive than these representations imply (cf. Bulhan, 1985).

According to Marks and Andersson (1990, p. 30), "the culture of violence exists at every level; and overt political violence must be located in this wider social context, as but one of the many forms and varieties of endemic violence". It is for this reason that "[it would be] seriously misleading to focus primarily on the more obvious cases of overt and explicitly political violence, [which constitute] only a small part of the overall picture" (ibid., p. 30).

Moreover, according to Hickson and Kriegler (in press, p. 170),

> abuse is always embedded in a series of interlinked contexts, ranging from the family and the community to larger social, economical and political contexts ... mechanisms of power in a society ... have their instruments and their logic at the effective level of the immediate environment, of the most basic units of society.

Thus, it is only by acknowledging the pervasive quality of general violence in society and its roots in political violence that its full impact on children can be adequately understood and accounted for.

Childhood

As with the concept of "public violence", there does not appear to be much agreement regarding what constitutes "childhood" (cf. Dawes, 1990). Within the scope of this report, it includes any persons under the age of eighteen who have not had adult status legally conferred on them and who thus qualify for certain special provisions within common law, the Criminal Procedure Act 51 of 1977 and the Child Act 74 of 1983 (cf. Dawes, 1987).

OTHER OBSTACLES TO ADEQUATE QUANTIFICATION

Other important obstacles in achieving a comprehensive statistical view of the impact of public violence on South African children are as follows:

Firstly, an "ethos of secrecy" cultivated and perpetuated under National Party rule which, at least until 1990, was blatantly invested in a policy of non-disclosure. This facilitated the shrouding of available statistical data as well as ensuring that minimal record-keeping took place (cf. Zille, 1980; Seedat, 1984; Savage, 1981; Welsh, 1981). With regard to children in detention, for example, Fourie (1990) demonstrates how official figures had been deliberately framed to dilute the full extent of government repression by specifying only those detained for periods longer than thirty days. The large numbers of children detained for periods shorter than one month were conveniently ignored. Furthermore, official figures had in the past frequently excluded the apartheid-created "homelands" from statistics which had the potential for embarrassing the government (Seedat, 1984). This has obviously distorted official statistics quite considerably.

The second obstacle is linked to the extent of public violence itself. According to Mkhize (1993), the extremely high incidence of public violence, together with other forms of violence, has resulted in "high levels of violence tolerance" (p. 7). This desensitisation has led to the gross under-reporting of the occurrence of political violence (cf. Masson & Killian, 1993; Netshiombo, 1993).

The third obstacle concerns the public's negative perception of South African security forces. This is largely due to the manner in which the state used these forces to enforce apartheid legislation and maintain a system of oppression (HRC, 1990). Consequently, people are generally very reluctant to report incidents of public violence to their local police stations.[1] Such perceptions have been reinforced by the increased awareness of the complicity of certain members of the security forces in various acts of public violence (Goldstone Commission, 1994; Straker & Moosa, 1992). This situation is exacerbated by the fact that incidents of violence occur most frequently in areas where alternative monitoring facilities, such as hospitals and clinics, are either inadequate or non-existent (Mkhize, 1993).

Furthermore, the conditions prevailing in the areas in which violence occurs preclude thorough research being conducted. Apart from the fact that areas affected by public violence are in constant flux, researchers also have to contend with threats to their own safety (NCRC, 1994). Indeed, incidents such as the killing and injury of various monitors and media workers conducting research in violence-torn areas has discouraged many researchers from working in these areas (cf. Oosterbroek, 1994).

Nonetheless, in areas where the incidence of public violence has subsided or is less intense, researchers frequently face another problem, namely the lack of co-operation from the communities in which they wish to conduct research. As the National Children's Rights Committee (1994) observes, past experience has taught survivors of public violence to distrust researchers and monitoring agencies because

> [apart] from ... promising aid [in exchange for information] and never returning after getting the information they wanted, others exploited the misery of [these people] by using them as study subjects for [the sole purpose of] furthering their own research (p. 12).

Relief agencies operating in these areas are frequently unable to help researchers either. Often they are so overwhelmed by requests for material and other forms of assistance that they fail to give attention to what can be considered one of their most important tasks, namely monitoring or recording the extent of public violence in the areas in which they are located. Where monitoring agencies have in the past attempted to record the impact of public violence, it has seldom been done in co-operation with other agencies working in the same area. This lack of co-operation and networking has led not only to wide-scale duplication of research and monitoring activities, but frequently also to gross contradictions and lacunae in the information available on the effects of public violence on South African children (Duncan et al., 1994; DNHPD, 1993). For example, in a recently published article, Simpson (1993) reports that 8 828 children were detained between 1985 and 1989 by the South African security forces. According to the HRC (1990), however, as many as 17 500 children were allegedly detained during the same period. Meanwhile Swartz and Levett (1989), referring to official figures, state that 11 000 children were detained during the period 1984 - 1986, yet Dowdall (1990) posits that 12 000 were detained during 1985 and 1986 alone.

Lastly, the low status accorded children in society, resulting in their not being taken seriously (Hickson & Kriegler, in press), is an overarching factor in the lack of documentation in spite of their political involvement in this country, especially since 1976. As Burman (1986) observes, this could be a consequence of a fairly widespread and problematic notion held by many social scientists and activists in South Africa (and indeed throughout the world), based on the perception that investigating the circumstances of children is a

> luxury for tranquil societies able to indulge their interest in marginal groups and topics of peripheral importance ... [and that where]... a society is ... in the throes of transformation, priorities [should be] different (p. 1).

HOW MUCH DID CHILDREN SUFFER UNDER APARTHEID?

The system of apartheid which characterised South African society for the better part of the present century can be considered one of the most pernicious forms of public violence this country has known. Firstly, like other systems of oppression, apartheid was "brought into existence and ... maintained by dint of violence" (Bulhan, 1985, p. 131). Indeed, as Bulhan observes, apartheid, along with nazism, embodied some of the worst forms of institutionalised violence witnessed anywhere in the world during the twentieth century (cf. Hickson & Kriegler, in press). Secondly, like many other forms of oppression, apartheid was a political system with a very specific political goal: the maintenance of political dominance of a white minority over the black majority (Straker & Moosa, 1922).

The mainstay of the apartheid system was the Population Registration Act of 1950, which itself constituted one of the worst forms of violence people of this country experienced (Hickson & Kriegler, in press). In essence, this act allowed for the categorisation of people into one of the four groups (based on race) created by the National Party government: "white", "Indian", "coloured" and "African". These categories formed the basis for the differential treatment of children in South Africa. White children usually had all the privileges and most of the rights enjoyed by children born into middle-class families in more affluent countries in the Western world (Fourie, 1990). Conversely, children from other groups were generally born into a world of state-orchestrated deprivation and violence.[2]

As Chikane (1986) notes: being born into apartheid South Africa, for most black children, meant being subjected to the deprivation and violence associated with living in the squalid, crime-infested ghettos created by the apartheid government for those not classified as white; malnutrition (see Tables 4 and 5); poor health (see Table 5); discriminatory social security/support (see Tables 6 and 7); poor education in frequently understaffed, ill-equipped and overcrowded schools designed for blacks (see Table 8); hardly ever seeing one's parents because they either worked long hours for predominantly white-controlled local enterprises or as migrant labourers far from home; living in communities constantly destabilised as a result of forced removals (see Tables 11 and 12), and having to endure the racist treatment and attitudes of the dominant group. The list is virtually interminable. In essence, apartheid gave rise to, and fed on, the brutalisation of black children and the communities in which they were located. To a certain extent, the brutalisation of black children can be seen as having been a precondition for the functioning and success of apartheid, because in order to succeed this system had to produce an oppressed group that was so dehumanised that it would accept white dominance, as well as its own domination, without too much protest (cf. Gibson, 1991; Bulhan, 1985).

In view of the patent malignancy of apartheid and the extensive damage which it undoubtedly caused in terms of the development of black children, it is somewhat intriguing to note that very few of the research papers submitted to the inquiry attempted to quantify this damage. Indeed, Dowdall's (1990) assertion that, as a result of apartheid, "some 33% of black children are stunted for their age ...

Table 1: 1990/93 INFANT MORTALITY RATES IN SOUTH AFRICA AND ELSEWHERE IN AFRICA

South Africa		
	Africans:	74,0 per 1 000
	'coloureds':	47,0 per 1 000
	Indians:	16,4 per 1 000
	whites:	10,8 per 1 000
	Average	**72,0 per 1 000**
Algeria:		**61,0 per 1 000**
Botswana:		**60,0 per 1 000**
Mauritius:		**26,0 per 1 000**

Source: SAIRR (1994)

Table 2: 1993 'UNDER-FIVE' MORTALITY RATES IN SOUTH AFRICA

Africans:	55 per 1 000
'coloureds':	—
Indians:	23 per 1 000
whites:	**17 per 1 000**
Average	**39 per 1 000**

Source: DNHPD (1993)

Table 3: CHILD MORTALITY RATES IN SOUTH AFRICA FOR 1986

Africans:	7,0 per 1 000
'coloureds':	4,2 per 1 000
Indians:	1,1 per 1 000
whites:	**0,9 per 1 000**
Average	**6,3 per 1 000**

Source: UNICEF & NCRC (1993)

Table 4: DIETARY SURVEY OF 12-YEAR-OLDS IN THE CAPE PENINSULA

Africans:	75% of the minimum recommended daily allowance
'coloureds':	100% of the minimum recommended daily allowance
whites:	**125%** of the minimum recommended daily allowance

Source: UNICEF & NCRC (1993)

Table 5: INFANT DEATHS DUE TO MALNUTRITION-RELATED DISEASES

blacks:	50% of all deaths
whites:	**7% of all deaths**

Source: Hickson & Kriegler (in press)

Table 6: TOTAL WELFARE EXPENDITURE BY S.A. GOVERNMENT: 1993/1994

	% of TOTAL POPULATION	% of TOTAL BUDGET
Africans:	69%	49%
'coloureds':	10%	25%
Indians:	3%	6%
whites:	16%	21%

Source: SAIRR (1994)

Table 7: MONTHLY STATE GRANTS FOR FOSTER CHILDREN FOR THE PERIOD 1992-1993

Africans:	R210,00 per child
'coloureds':	R229,00 per child
Indians:	R229,00 per child
whites:	**R244,00 per child**

Source: UNICEF & NCRC (1993)

Table 8: SOME INEQUALITIES IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

	1984 - 1985 per capita expenditure per child	1985 pupil/teacher ratios
white children:	**R1 702**	**18.7:1**
Indian children:	R1 112	22.5:1
'coloured' children:	R 639	25.4:1
African children:	R 169	41.2:1

Source: Fourie (1990)

Table 9: PRIMARY SCHOOL COMPLETION

Africans:	45%
'coloureds':	97%
Indians:	98%
whites:	**100%**

Source: UNICEF (1994)

Table 10: PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF SOME RACIAL INEQUALITIES IN THE EDUCATION ATTAINMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA

	WHITE	INDIAN	'COLOURED'	AFRICAN
School-leavers passing Std Ten Certificate **(1983)**	**80**	86	72.5	86
School-leavers obtaining university entrance **(1984)**	**49**	40	14.9	12.3

Source: Nasson (1986)

Table 11: REMOVALS DUE TO THE GROUP AREAS ACT: 1960-1983

victims of forced removals	3,5 million people
those disrupted by & under threat of forced removals	1,8 million people

Source: Simpson (1993)

Table 12: PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF WHITES, 'COLOUREDS' AND INDIANS AFFECTED BY REMOVALS DUE TO THE GROUP AREAS ACT: 1960-1982

whites	1.85%
'coloureds'	66.24%
Indians	31.92%

Source: SAIRR (in Dawes, 1986)

and that black children are between 14 and 15 times more likely to die before their fifth birthday than white South African children" (p. 88), and the statistics presented above, constitute the bulk of attempts at quantifying the deleterious effects of apartheid on South Africa's children.

There are several possible reasons for this paucity of statistics. The first and most obvious reason is linked to the unwillingness of the apartheid government to make any information regarding the harmfulness of its policies known to the public (HRC, 1990; Allwood, 1980).

Another possible reason identified by Madela and Poggenpoel (1993) is that, with few exceptions, South African social scientists have until the late 1980s been relatively unwilling to undertake any research which would have found disfavour — even heavy-handed censure — with the former apartheid government. This would obviously have included research on the pernicious effects of apartheid on the development of children. Indeed, the apartheid authorities are known to have actively discouraged (for example, through withholding research grants, censorship and detentions) any research which had the potential of reflecting negatively on its policies (Savage, 1981; Welsh, 1981).

A third reason could be that many researchers to whom the inquiry appealed for submissions may not have felt that their research dealing with the impact of apartheid practices on child development would fall under the rubric of public/political violence. Given the dominant representation of public violence which has permeated the mass media over the last few years, this of course would not be very surprising. As noted earlier, the term "public violence" is most frequently used in the media in relation to "black-on-black" violence, as well as to criminalise counter-violence (i.e. violence employed to counter oppression) (HRC, 1990). The term is used much less frequently to refer to state-orchestrated violence.

Another reason for the paucity of statistical data is, of course, that it is not always easy or possible to quantify this damage. How does one, for example, quantify the impact of parental incarceration due to pass law offences on the well-being of the child? Nonetheless, there are a number of very informative studies of an essentially descriptive nature which depict the ravages of apartheid practices on the development of South African children (cf. Simpson, 1993; Ramphele, 1992; Allwood, 1986; Burman & Reynolds, 1986).

In conclusion, despite the fact that the statistics presented above are sparse — particularly those dealing with the mortality rates of infants and pre-school children — they nonetheless serve as an indication of the essentially destructive nature of apartheid in regard to the development of children.

COUNTER-VIOLENCE AND STATE REPRESSION

If there is one characteristic which most forms of oppression have in common, it is that they are normally challenged by those whom they seek to oppress (Thompson, 1984). Apartheid was no exception to this general rule. Since its inception, this vicious system has constantly been challenged and attacked by the oppressed in this country. As Boesak (in Hickson & Kriegler, in press) once observed during the 1980s, "South Africa has been a violent society with violent laws ... [which] ... invites [counter-] violence. This view is held by some revolutionaries as justification for the use of physical violence in liberation movements" (p. 172). That this counter-violence had a profound effect not only on the apartheid government against which it was aimed, but also on the lives of South African children, is undeniable (Hickson, 1992). It disrupted children's schooling and their access to health and social services (NCRC, 1994), led to large numbers of children and adolescents leaving the country to undergo military training (Majodina, 1989) and, during the early 1990s, resulted in an alarming number of children being inducted into self-styled armies and self-defence units (SDUs) (Mlazi, 1994; Hickson, 1992). Unfortunately, no comprehensive statistics with regard to the effects of counter-violence on the lives of children are available.[3] However, even though no adequate statistics exist, it is widely acknowledged that the consequences of such violence in the lives of children were substantial (Mlazi, 1994; Hickson, 1992; Majodina, 1989).

Like other systems of oppression, the apartheid system employed a number of repressive measures in order to control dissent as well as to maintain and perpetuate itself. These included detention without trial, house arrest, torture, states of emergency and the military occupation of black residential areas (HRC 1990; Dawes, 1987). No-one was exempt from these repressive measures — not even children. Indeed, after the 1976 Soweto uprisings, state repression of South African children intensified to levels rarely witnessed elsewhere in the world.

Table 13: SUMMARY OF DETENTIONS BETWEEN 1960 & 1994

TOTAL	80 000
women	10 000
children	15 000

Source: HRC (1993b)

Table 14: SUMMARY OF DETAINED CHILDREN

PERIOD	NO. OF CHILDREN DETAINED
07/1985-03/1986	2 923
06/1986-06/1987	4 982
06/1987-06/1988	490
06/1988-01/1989	433

Source: Simpson (1993)

Table 15: CHILD VICTIMS OF SECURITY FORCE VIOLENCE: 1984-1986

300	children killed
1 000	children wounded
18 000	children arrested on protest charges
173 000	children awaiting trial

Source: Straker (1994)

Table 16: INDIVIDUALS TREATED FOR GUNSHOT WOUNDS AT THE SACLA CLINIC (CROSSROADS) FROM FEBRUARY TO NOVEMBER 1985: AN EXAMPLE OF THE PERCENTAGE OF CHILD VICTIMS OF POLICE VIOLENCE

500	Total
118 (23,6%)	were children between 15 and 20 years of age
41 (8,2%)	were children younger than 15 years

Source: Hickson & Kriegler (in press)

Detention without trial

There does not appear to be a great degree of consistency in the statistics regarding the detention of South African children during the late 1970s and the 1980s. Nonetheless, children were detained in very large numbers and they constituted a significant proportion of all those detained by the South African security forces during this period. Extant research reveals that until 1989 children consistently constituted between 25% and 46,5% of all detainees held by these forces (Dowdall, 1990; HRC, 1990; Editorial, 1988). Of these, 25% were aged 16 years and younger (Dowdall, 1990) and an alarming 6,13% were 14 years of age and younger (Simpson, 1993), some as young as 7 years of age (Hickson, 1992).

To fully appreciate the gravity of these statistics, it is important also to take cognisance of the conditions of detention in South Africa over approximately the last two decades. During the various states of emergency that characterised this period, security legislation basically enabled the police and armed forces to disregard all legislation promulgated to protect children, such as the Child Care Act 74 of 1983 and the Criminal Procedure Act 51 of 1977. Children were allowed to be forcibly removed from their homes and communities, and were detained in prison. Very frequently, they were held for indefinite periods in solitary confinement or in overcrowded communal cells, without knowing when or if they were to be released (HRC, 1990). Beyond this incarceration itself,[4] there are countless allegations as well as evidence of children being subjected to violations such as beatings, sleep deprivation, sexual assault and long periods of interrogation (HRC, 1990). Despite the notoriously barbaric measures resorted to for the extraction of incriminating information from child detainees (e.g. suffocation and electric shocks), the state was unable to formally charge and convict 94% of these detainees on any offences. During the 1980s approximately 75% of these children were ultimately released without being charged with any crime (Hickson & Kriegler, in press; HRC, 1990).

The mass detention of children during the 1980s did not go unnoticed nor unopposed. Toward the end of this decade the activities of organisations such as the Detainees Parents' Support Committee increasingly forced the state's heinous maltreatment of children into the public spotlight. Together with the international outcry that followed, it compelled the state to decrease the number of child detainees (Dawes, 1987). Unfortunately, this did not signal the end of state repressive actions against children. As the following two sections reveal, it merely resulted in a reorientation or modernisation of the state's repressive practices — a shift in focus.

House arrest

The State of Emergency regulations of 1988 enabled the government to replace detention in prison with detention at home, commonly known as house arrest, which in effect meant that the homes of certain children were transformed into prisons, and their parents into jailers. It is estimated that during 1989 alone at least 39 ex-detainees younger than 18 years of age were restricted in this manner (HRC, 1990). Owing to the fear of being re-detained many children who had escaped house arrest went into hiding and stayed on the run for years. Unfortunately, no comprehensive statistics regarding the numbers and ages of these "internal refugees" are currently available.

"Re-education" camps for children

There is evidence that the state, during the mid-1980s, experimented with "re-education" camps for children who would otherwise be detained in prison (Hickson, 1992; Dawes, 1987). This new strategy, which received strong support from the President's Council, had as its primary objective the inculcation in young anti-apartheid activists of attitudes and views which were in keeping with the system of apartheid. While this strategy "removed much of the basis for outrage associated with the incarceration of children" (Dawes, 1987, p. 44), it also constituted a clear attempt to indoctrinate them. As such, it constituted nothing short of psychological abuse. Once again, unfortunately, no statistics regarding the number of children detained in these camps are currently available.

Other forms of repression to which children were subjected

Detention in prison, house arrest and re-education camps were not the only forms of state repression and abuse to which South African children were subjected over the years. As indicated in Tables 15 and 16, large numbers of children were also killed and injured by the security forces during periods of political unrest. One study concerning such action during periods of political foment found that 12% of the total number of people killed as a result of police action were younger than 15 years of age (Editorial, 1988). The information excludes the number of children physically abused by security force personnel in an effort to obtain incriminating information about activists known to the children. Considering the degree of fear inspired by these forces,[5] and given the unlimited power which they wielded, it is hardly surprising that no comprehensive statistics exist.

Given the information presented above, it is quite understandable that the New York Committee for Human Rights during the 1980s labelled the South African government's war against what it called "terrorism", a veritable "war against children" (Dowdall, 1990, p. 89).

VIOLENCE IN THE COMMUNITY

The notion of intra-community or "black-on-black" violence is controversial and its occurrence has frequently resulted in the confirmation of entrenched racist stereotypes (cf. Duncan, 1994), rather than in the deeper understanding of complex social and political processes. Several studies and reports locate the onset of this form of violence at the beginning of this decade (Minnaar, 1994; HRC, 1990, 1991, 1992, 1993a, 1993b). However, the Nationalist government frequently used the idea of "black-on-black" violence to deny its responsibility in outcomes, such as razing the shelters of squatter communities. The factors involved in the creation, maintenance and perpetuation of this violence are interwoven and defy simplistic analysis. Nonetheless, the loss of human lives and the physical and psychological scars arising from this period are staggering. According to Minnaar (1994), an estimated 11 000 people died in the Pretoria-Witwatersrand-Vereeniging and Natal/KwaZulu regions, as a result of political violence during the three years beginning 1990, compared to an estimated 3 500 people in the period 1984 to 1989. These figures should not, however, be used to disregard the devastating impact of events prior to 1990. In fact, any attempt to separate this three-year period from a broad historical process would be futile. Much of the turmoil and social disintegration depicted by more recent levels of political violence is the result of oppressive rule for so long.

Despite acknowledgement of the enormous degree to which children have suffered, and continue to suffer, as a result of political violence, little statistical data is available for this period. As a result, the present statistical analysis (presented in Table 17) approaches the core issue of children and violence indirectly by drawing on several reports detailing the overall intensity of violence in the country (HRC, 1991, 1992, 1993a, 1993b; SA Institute of Race Relations, 1994; Minnaar, 1994). Several categories have been selected in an effort to communicate the severity and intensity of intra-community violence. These categories are not original in their design and are based on three indicators used by the Human Rights Commission to track the intensity of violence. These include the number of political incidents per year, the number of deaths, as well as the number of injuries resulting from such incidents. In most cases, the figures reflected in each cell consist of the minimum and maximum figures of the studies used. This variance is the result of differences between various studies in the presentation and use of statistical data.[6]

Table 17: STATISTICS REGARDING POLITICAL VIOLENCE: 1990-1993

1. Incidents of political violence				
	1990	1991	1992	1993
	2538	1977-2160	2740-3534	4189-5562
2. Politically-related deaths				
*Overall	1990	1991	1992	1993
	2671-3699	2234-2582	2840-3499	3706-4398
3. Politically-related injuries				
*Overall	1990	1991	1992	1993
	4309	3160-4060	4815-5085	4339-4790
4. Statistics regarding children				
*Politically-related deaths	1990	1991	1992	1993
	No figures	No figures	12-106	58-158
*Politically-related injuries	1990	1991	1992	1993
	No figures	No figures	87-102	208-211

Sources: Minnaar (1994); SAIRR (1994); HRC (1991, 1992, 1993a, 1993b)

There is a dearth of statistics regarding children that is anomalous given the context of the generalised high level of political violence in the country. The numbers reflected in Table 17 are dwarfed by the incidence of criminal violence against children over a similar period highlighted in Table 18.

Given that both political and other forms of violence are under-reported, it is more likely that the discrepancy between the two sets

Table 18: CRIMES AGAINST CHILDREN REPORTED TO THE S.A. POLICE: 1989-1991

CRIME	1989	1990	1991	TOTALS
Murder	172	202	174	548
Physical assault	2 251	2 720	3 060	8 031
Sexual assault	5 585	6 111	6 548	18 244
TOTALS	8 008	9 033	9 782	26 823

Source: HSRC (1994)

of figures reflects the pervasive degree to which children in South Africa are exposed to violence per se, rather than to any one specific type of violence.[7] Consequently, any future initiatives developed to address the effects of violence on children should adopt a wider lens and include all forms of violence children encounter.

Statistical information, however, does not represent an end in itself. After all, the social and psychological effects of political violence may in fact be incalculable and impossible to quantify, particularly when limited to the above categories of death and physical injury (Duncan & Rock, 1994; Bundy, 1992). If, however, we are to intervene meaningfully and responsibly, a clearer understanding of the types of violence, and the results of specific exposure need to be explored. Research in this direction has begun to take place. Studies undertaken by the National Children's Rights Committee (1994) in the Pretoria-Witwatersrand-Vereeniging and Natal regions represent a case in point. Tables 19 and 20 below highlight some of the finer distinctions made regarding violence and children.

Although the figures reflected in Tables 17 and 18 only apply to the Pretoria-Witwatersrand-Vereeniging and Natal regions, Minnaar (1994) states that these regions account for approximately 96% of the violence nationally. Table 21 represents a national extrapolation of the figures, based on these percentages.

Table 19: NUMBER OF CHILDREN DISPLACED DUE TO CONFLICT IN PWV REGION DURING THE LAST 3 YEARS*

Total no. of children:	18 080	
No. of under-fives:	9 010	50%
No. of abandoned/lost children:	2 040	11%
No. of children orphaned:	1 539	9%
No. physically traumatised:	392	2%
Other	5 099	28%

* number of displacees based on figures from the areas surveyed
Source: NCRC (1994)

Table 20: NUMBER OF CHILDREN DISPLACED DUE TO CONFLICT IN THE NATAL REGION DURING THE LAST 3 YEARS*

Total no. of children:	26 790	
No. of under-fives:	11 845	44%
No. of abandoned/lost children:	4 990	19%
No. of children orphaned:	2 425	9%
No. physically traumatised:	1 398	5%
Other	6 132	23%

* number of displacees based on figures from the areas surveyed
Source: NCRC (1994)

Table 21: NUMBER OF CHILDREN DISPLACED DUE TO CONFLICT IN SOUTH AFRICA DURING THE LAST 3 YEARS

Total no. of children:	46 664
No. of under-fives:	21 689
No. of abandoned/lost children:	7 311
No. of children orphaned:	4 122
No. physically traumatised:	1 861
Other	11 680

Source: based on statistics in NCRC (1994)

To further illustrate the notion of different contexts, many studies have unequivocally shown that Natal/KwaZulu and the Pretoria-Witwatersrand-Vereeniging region have been high conflict areas. Nonetheless, the duration of this conflict and its underlying dynamics differ dramatically from one locality to another (for a more detailed explanation see Minnaar, 1994; NCRC, 1994; HRC 1991, 1992, 1993a, 1993b). Investigation of how these differences affect children could be undertaken. Efforts such as those tabled above could be replicated and expanded upon, resulting in the development of regional initiatives which address the particular needs of children in different areas who have experienced violence in varying contexts.

ENDNOTES

1. It is perhaps for this reason that the inquiry's efforts to obtain data from the South African police regarding the effects of public violence on children were largely futile.

2. See Giliomee and Schlemmer (1989) for a fairly detailed discussion of the bulwark of laws which girded this deprivation and violence.

3. Several government departments and NGOs were approached for statistics in this regard. The only statistical information that could be obtained is that approximately 10 000 children are currently active in SDUs in the Pretoria-Witwatersrand-Vereeniging area (official of the Department of Safety and Security, Pretoria-Witwatersrand-Vereeniging, personal communication, 1994). This figure was not verified.

4. This, as the HRC (1990) observes, constitutes one of the worst forms of torture in itself.

5. Indeed, Beukes and Heyns (1994) found that even when security force abuses are much less likely to happen than, for example, ten years ago, more than 50% of adolescents still exhibit extreme fear of the security forces.

6. These include the following dimensions: what constitutes an incident of political violence, the time-frame employed in each study, the depiction of certain geographical areas, and the use of various databases for data collection.

7. Although the impact of all forms of violence on children is acknowledged, criminal violence has often travelled on the back of political violence.

CHAPTER 4

GOING BEYOND THE STATISTICS

Norman Duncan & Brian Rock

Despite the gaps in the statistics there is a vast amount of information regarding the consequences of public violence for children involved in difficult circumstances. Any effort to convey or understand the meaning of traumatic life experiences on behalf of those who have experienced these events first-hand, however, is fraught with reductionism. This publication will hopefully begin a lengthy, much-needed process that will empower such persons to speak for themselves.

CHILDREN UNDER APARTHEID

According to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child of 1989, the state should be the ultimate guardian of children. In this capacity, it is responsible for safeguarding both children's physical and psychological well-being (Straker & Moosa, 1992).

However, under apartheid rule this was never the case, certainly not as far as black children were concerned. Indeed, apartheid created a society which, far from being nurturing and protective towards black children, was blatantly neglectful and abusive (cf. Hickson & Kriegler, in press; Straker & Moosa, 1992).

Apartheid influenced all aspects of South African children's lives, and in the case of black children its effects were uniformly and profoundly destructive. Some of the more obvious consequences of apartheid included unacceptably high levels of malnutrition and preventable diseases, as well as alarmingly high infant and pre-adolescent mortality rates. Given that these consequences were not accidental but largely the outcome of the social, political and economic policies which characterised the grand apartheid epoch, the state (and its partners) can well be accused of intentional and active child abuse (Straker & Moosa, 1992).

Malnutrition

Malnutrition, suffered both during prenatal and postnatal development, can be considered the single biggest killer of black South African children during the era of apartheid. In 1983, Moosa (in Seedat, 1984) reported that South Africa's pre-adolescent mortality rate directly due to malnutrition stood at 30 000 per year - three to four deaths per hour. The casualties in most cases were black children; particularly those living in the rural homeland areas (Thomas, 1987). In view of the inherent flaws in the methods and criteria normally used to collect data in South Africa, the figures presented above should be considered as relatively conservative.

While it is true that hundreds of thousands of children died of malnutrition as a result of apartheid policies (Seedat, 1984), it is also true that many victims of malnutrition survived into adolescence and adulthood. However, this does not mean that they escaped unscathed.

It is generally accepted that the first five years of life (including the prenatal period) constitute the most critical period in the child's growth cycle (Berger, 1994). During no other period will the child, at a physical level, develop as rapidly as during these first few years of life. It is for this reason that it is so essential that children during this period in particular receive an adequate diet. Anything less can substantially slow down physical growth. Moreover, various studies conducted in North and South America show that children who are malnourished during the first five years of life tend to be physically shorter than their peers for the rest of their lives.

Malnutrition not only causes stunted growth but also leads to a variety of other physical defects such as carious teeth, bowed legs, and an increased susceptibility to a variety of diseases, all of which can exert a relatively adverse effect on a child's development. For example, constant illness due to malnutrition can be particularly harmful during the pre-school years, as it has the potential to retard significantly the development of various physical-motor skills. Furthermore, because malnutrition during early childhood can lead to retarded brain growth, it obviously has negative consequences for the child's mental development and, consequently, for his or her quality of life throughout childhood and adulthood.

Research indicates that prolonged malnutrition during childhood could lead to a variety of behavioural and personality disorders, as well as the exacerbation of any existing problems. The most salient of these include disorientation, lethargy, restlessness, aggression and, most importantly, a basic orientation of mistrust towards the world at large (Thomas, 1987). As Thomas (1987) succinctly states, "Malnutrition fairly bristles with psychosocial pathology ... It is both the result of a sequence of sick events by and in a sick society and a cause of pathology" (p. 114).

The worst part, perhaps, of the endemic nature of malnutrition and infant mortality is that it has occurred in a country of considerable wealth and resources, often priding itself in having the strongest and most stable economy in Africa. With its per capita gross national product (GNP) at R2 300 in 1981, South Africa had a disturbingly high infant mortality rate (IMR) of 90 deaths per 1 000 births (often reaching an alarming 300 per 1 000 births in certain rural areas) which surpassed that of several poorer African countries

(Seedat, 1984). For example, in 1981, Kenya, a relatively poor country with a per capita GNP of R460, had an IMR of 80 per 1 000 (Seedat, 1984).

The disparity between economic wealth on the one hand and marked deprivation on the other is a defining characteristic of the racist ideology underpinning apartheid. As such this system has resulted in the erosion of families, inadequate educational opportunities and the crippling of social services, and has left emotional scars in its propagation of racism.

Destruction of families

The family is often perceived as providing the ideal context within which child development can take place. This perception basically derives from the belief that the family unit is pre-eminently suited to satisfy not only children's most basic physiological needs but also their emotional, cognitive and other higher order needs. According to the Department of National Health and Population Development (1993), the family is "ideally suited to deal with all these aspects to help the child towards developing as a well adjusted and productive member of society" (p. 2).

In South Africa, however, the pressures of apartheid and its attempts to destroy all viable black social structures made it extremely difficult for the majority of families in this country to provide the context within which these needs could be satisfactorily fulfilled. Through the decades the migrant labour system, the Population Registration Act of 1950, the Group Areas Acts of 1950 and 1966 and myriad other calculated assaults directed against blacks by the apartheid system effectively militated against black families providing the type of environment in which healthy children could be raised (Robinson, 1994). Indeed, apartheid

"... steadily denuded [the black family] of its ability to provide a structured, nurturing ambience ... [for] the developing child" (p. 2).

A closer examination of the Group Areas Act and the migrant labour system reveals the disastrous effects these had on the family. During apartheid the right to own and occupy land was largely determined by one's "race". In terms of the Group Areas Acts people were not allowed to own or occupy property destined for the exclusive occupation of another "race group". When the government demarcated an area for occupation by a particular group, all members of other groups who had until that point occupied or owned property in that area instantaneously became "disqualified persons", meaning that their presence in that area became proscribed (Robinson, 1994). Needless to say, this fate befell mainly black people (Giliomee & Schlemmer, 1989).

The Group Areas Acts had a devastating impact on black families for essentially two reasons. Firstly, being uprooted from the communities in which one had been located for many generations, in itself, constituted an exceedingly traumatic and destabilising event for most evicted families. This is amply illustrated by the fact that mortality rates normally soared among people who, as a result of apartheid, were forcefully displaced from the areas where they had established themselves. Wilson and Ramphele (in Hickson & Kriegler, in press) poignantly sum up the devastating impact of the Group Areas Acts on affected families and the communities in which they were located, as follows:

> It was like a man with a stick breaking spider webs in a forest. The spider may survive the fall, but he can't survive without his web ... Before, there was always something that kept the community ticking over and operating correctly ... there was the extended family, the granny and grandpa were at home ... looking after the

> kids. Now, the family is taken out of this environment where everything is safe and known. It is put in a matchbox in a strange place. All social norms have suddenly been abolished (pp. 186-187).

Secondly, the majority of black people who had lost their hard-earned properties were obliged to take up residence in the various townships or ghettos allocated to them by the apartheid government. These townships, which as a rule were characterised by extremely poor quality housing, were normally situated very far from the industrial areas where most black people worked (Robinson, 1994; McKendrick & Senoamadi, 1990). This meant that many parents had to leave home before sunrise to reach their workplace on time. Normally they returned home well after dark. The effects which this state of affairs had on parent-child interaction were devastating. Parents left home in the mornings before children woke up and returned from work when their children were already asleep. The only time they could really spend with their children was over weekends — that is, unless household chores did not take up most of their time (Robinson, 1994; Netshiombo, 1993).

The family has traditionally been credited with the function of protecting children against the evils of society. And indeed, to millions — especially to oppressed groupings — this social unit does provide children with a refuge from the ravages of an often very hostile world, thereby offering them a relatively safe space within which to develop. However, in South Africa, and particularly in the ghettos to which most black people in this country were banished, this was hardly possible. The fact that these black townships or ghettos were usually severely overcrowded,[1] under-serviced, dreary, poverty-stricken and crime-ridden created unbearable tensions in family life, often leading to high levels of anger and aggression. This, in turn, frequently led to the violent abuse of children (Dowdall, 1990). The extent of the violence to which these children were, and indeed still are, subjected is reflected in a recent survey which reveals that 80% of agencies offering assistance to children in distress report that a significant number of their patients or clients are victims of intra-family violence. Moreover, interviews with people working at some of these agencies, as well as research recently conducted by the Human Sciences Research Council (1994), reveal that intra-family violence, as opposed to other forms of violence, is assuming alarming proportions. Instead of offering children a haven from the hardships caused by apartheid practices, many families in this country, largely because of such practices, were frequently responsible for the further brutalisation of children (DNHPD, 1993).

Furthermore, the hazards of township life,[2] together with the fact that the parents of most township children generally cannot offer them sufficient emotional support (Robertson, 1990), have led to a disproportionately large number of black children in this country presenting with a variety of debilitating psychological problems, most notably pervasive anger, constant anxiety, depression and behaviour problems (cf. Beukes & Heyns, 1994; Shmukler, 1990; Majodina, 1989). Moreover, the endemic poverty and chaotic conditions which may characterise township and family life have resulted in black children experiencing a range of developmental problems, such as cognitive retardation and difficulties in developing a well-grounded identity; problems which may ultimately compromise their quality of life and their contribution to society (Beukes & Heyns, 1994; Allwood, 1987). Beukes and Heyns (1994) recently undertook a survey of the mental health status of adolescents raised in urban and rural townships in the Orange Free State. Their findings (see Table 22) sketch a grim picture of the consequences of life in black townships for adolescents who reside there.

The stresses associated with township life, their effect on township families and their subsequent inability to offer sufficient protection to children have, during the last decade in particular, led to an increasing number of children joining various types of substitute "families" such as criminal gangs, prostitution rings and the bands of homeless children found in most of South Africa's cities (NCRC, 1994; Mokwena, 1992). While these at least "offer [children] a degree of hope and psychological feeling of belonging" (NCRC, 1994, p. 66), the price of affiliation is enormous: joining these gangs means that children frequently come into conflict with the law and abandon their schooling.

Table 22: SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF ADOLESCENTS FROM BLACK RURAL & URBAN TOWNSHIPS

35.8%	are left without any supervision after school hours
50.8%	preoccupied by a fear of thieves
37.1%	preoccupied by the possible death of their parents
09.0%	use marijuana at least thrice per week
76.5%	exhibit at least three stress-related symptoms
39.4%	exhibit five or more depression symptoms*
59.6%	exhibit two to three symptoms of PTSD
66.9%	had experienced at least one traumatic incident which they cannot forget

* According to the DSM-III-R, five symptoms or more are indicative of major depression.

Source: Beukes and Heyns (1994)

While the situation of children raised in the urban black ghettos has until now generally been bleak, the condition of children whose families had been banished to the economically barren "homelands"[3] is even more disconcerting. Apartheid legislation prohibited residents of the "homelands" or "TBVC-states" (Transkei, Bophutatswana, Venda and Ciskei) from residing in "white" South Africa where most industries were located (Thomas, 1987). The only exceptions made were for those adults who could obtain permits to work as migrant labourers in the "white" industrial areas.

Those who did not possess the necessary documents faced arrest and incarceration, inevitably leading to the destabilisation of other family members. In cases where the breadwinners from these families managed to procure permits to work in these areas, it meant that they were separated from their families for six to eleven months per year. This state of affairs had a devastating impact on the integrity of a significant number of black families[4] and their ability to provide an environment in which children could develop. Indeed, as Thomas (1987) observes, children suffered most under the homelands and migrant labour systems because, for them, these systems in effect meant malnutrition,[5] an impoverished, unstimulating environment, and being without one or both of their parents for the better part of the year:

> Most [homeland] children grow up without their fathers and many without their mothers. Most are suboptimally nurtured by guardians [mostly ageing grandparents] who are seldom as competent or as uniquely motivated ... as a loving, resourceful ... [parent] would be" (p. 114).

In the view of Hickson and Kriegler (in press) children, more than anyone else, suffered the heaviest "burdens of uncertainty and fear due to the risks of family breakdown" (p. 189) — uncertainty and fear exacerbated by the fact that many migrant labourers, succumbing to the terrible loneliness and despair of being separated from their families in the homelands, often started second families with women away from home. A second family not only meant that these men had less money for the support of their already malnourished children in the homelands, but also increased the likelihood of their abandoning their first families altogether — a frequent occurrence (Thomas, 1987).

According to Thomas (1987), the conditions to which many homelands children were subjected resembled punishment: the punishment of abandonment, malnutrition and a dreary environment. In this regard, Hickson and Kriegler (in press) observe:

> Rural landscapes are often denuded of foliage. Every twig and rock has been used as firewood or to build shelter [...] A concomitant of [the omnipresent poverty is the] bleak, stimulus-reduced surroundings and grinding boredom ... there is virtually nothing to do. There are no fields to till and no cattle to tend ... boredom hangs around like a dark cloud. And closely associated with it despair (p. 195).

Obviously, the caregivers of homelands children were also severely affected by these unbearable conditions. However, rather than making them more sensitive to their children's plight, these conditions frequently only served to add insult to injury. As Thomas (1987) notes:

> Many [caregivers] ... trapped in intolerable life circumstances, may relate to their children only through verbal abuse and threats and ready blows, towering over bewildered, terrified and equally trapped small children (p. 114).

The cruelty of the homelands system is also poignantly illustrated by the following comment of a homelands mother in regard to her visibly malnourished child: "I hit him because he is naughty, he is always crying for bread" (in Thomas, 1987, p. 114). In view of the manner in which they are customarily socialised (viz. good behaviour is rewarded and bad behaviour is punished), children abused in this manner inevitably conclude that they are bad. However, because they cannot identify the true nature of their "crime", they become extremely confused. The psychological consequences are feelings of worthlessness, pervasive resentment, formless anger and disproportionately high levels of relatively serious forms of psychopathology (Thomas, 1987).

Given this country's recent history, Thomas's summation of the effects of life in the homelands on the psychological status of children during the late 1980s today seems prophetic :

> [The children in the homelands] are powerhouses of ammunition with no clear target. Usually they turn it on themselves self-destructively or outwards in flailing unproductive violence ... it is this pressure-cooker of emotions that erupts into the sordid degrading mess of ... [necklacings] battered wives and girlfriends (pp. 114 - 115).

Perhaps the gravest consequence of apartheid's systematic destruction of the black family is the growing number of young black children and adolescents who have lost all respect for their parents, who, in turn, have lost all confidence in their ability to be effective parents (Dawes & Finchelescu, 1993; Ramphele, 1992; Davie, 1990). In contemporary society parents are normally regarded as the custodians of societal values and rules. In other words, it is essentially parents who instil communal rules and values in children (DNHPD, 1993). However, children will usually only internalise these values and rules if they respect and identify with their parents. How can children who have witnessed the systematic humiliation, subjugation and disempowerment of their parents be expected to have internalised the social norms and values (such as the sanctity of human life) which make communal life possible? Moreover, how can children whose parents were felt to be completely disempowered in their capacity as parents one day be effective parents themselves?

Education

According to UNICEF and NCRC (1993), adequate education should be considered the inalienable right of every child, because "through education ... [children] gain knowledge and skills to survive, to learn, to live dignified lives, and to contribute to the development of their communities and their nation" (p. 53). Under apartheid, however, the development of the vast majority of children was compromised severely when it came to receiving an education. The education system became a tool for the apartheid government to create and entrench racial, class and ethnic inequalities rather than to ensure the optimal development of children (UNICEF & NCRC, 1993). As the architect of apartheid, Verwoerd, so bluntly declared:

> The school must equip the Bantu to meet the demands which the economic life of South Africa will impose on him ... there is no place [for the black child] in the European [i.e., white] community above certain forms of labour. What is the use of teaching a Bantu child mathematics when it (sic) cannot use it in practice. That is absurd (Nicholas, 1990:52).

Conversely, white children were inculcated with "the aspiration to guard [their group's] identity ... and conformity to and support for the apartheid system" (Cooper et al., 1990). Thus, in apartheid South Africa, education was used to encourage lifelong subservience in black children, and to prepare white children for their role as dominators.

As was the case with so many other services, the provision of educational resources in South Africa followed a pattern of racial inequality that reinforced the relations of domination that characterised the apartheid order. Beyond the statistics that reveal such inequities, vast differences between black and white children's qualitative experiences at school abounded.

Black children's schools were normally overcrowded and ill-equipped, with primitive or non-existent ablution facilities.

Buildings were frequently littered with broken windows, classrooms frequently without doors. In a study conducted in the Pietermaritzburg area, only 5% of these schools were electrified Gultig & Hart, 1990). Teachers staffing these schools had either the minimum qualifications or no qualifications whatsoever. Frequently these schools were vandalised by disgruntled community members always aware that these facilities erected by the apartheid government were designed to retard rather than enhance the development of their children (Beukes & Heyns, 1994).

In direct contrast, white schools resembled those of any other middle-class community within the industrialised world, with suitably qualified teachers and the best technology required to optimise the development of children. As Mokwena (1992) states:

> From within the educational system which was supposed to nurture growth and development, black children have experienced levels of violence incomprehensible to their peers in white schools and other countries (p. 34).

While it was always argued that there were insufficient funds available to improve educational facilities for blacks, the governments of the post-1948 era wasted enormous sums of money by maintaining nineteen different educational departments for the various ethnic groups in South Africa (of their creation), all in pursuit of their apartheid policies (UNICEF & NCRC, 1993). The apartheid system's attempts to utilise education to reinforce the inequalities of the broader South African society were relatively successful. Compared to white children, very few black children could complete their scholastic education. Of those who did, very few qualified to enter tertiary institutions or employment.

According to UNICEF and NCRC (1993), the inadequate provision of pre-school facilities can be seen as one of the chief causes for the high failure rates among black schoolchildren in this country. Various studies show that a good pre-school education seems to be one of the more important prerequisites for — or indicators of — deprived children's successful performance at primary and high school (cf. UNICEF & NCRC, 1993). This finding is linked to the fact that adequate pre-school institutions normally offer these children greater access to health care, supplementary nutrition and a much more stimulating environment[6]. Yet only 6% of African children aged 0 to 6 years have access to educare facilities. Access to these facilities for "coloured" and Indian children is 11% and 14%, respectively (UNICEF & NCRC, 1993).

The traumatic effects of prejudice

The proponents of apartheid always claimed that policies were designed to ensure the optimal development of all the people in this country, including blacks. Abandoning apartheid and its central tenet of racial segregation, they argued, could only lead to racial tension and feelings of inferiority on the part of blacks. Since the inception of apartheid, however, most progressive and sober-minded social scientists have consistently contested this preposterous claim (cf. Bundy, 1992; Burman, 1986). According to them, apartheid had one primary objective: to ensure white dominance and privilege, at the expense of others.

The structural racism embodied by apartheid should not be perceived as a phenomenon that merely operates to the benefit of dominant groups. Rather, as Memmi (1982:147) correctly observed, it is a phenomenon that operates "au profit de l'accusateur **[mais aussi] au detriment de sa victime**" (emphasis added). When Memmi states that racism operates to the detriment of the victim, he does not merely refer to the material deprivation or social and political exclusion to which targets of racism are subjected, but also to the profound psychological harm brought about by these practices.

Various South African social scientists (e.g. Simpson, 1993; Robertson, 1990) have already commented on the extremely negative impact on the psychological development of black children in this country of the racist prejudice which apartheid engendered. More specifically, the institutionalised racism of apartheid had the potential to induce the development of a host of identifiably "racism-related" disorders or conditions among black children as well as their caregivers (Simpson 1993). Most notably, this could include the development of anger towards their own group, a pathological striving for assimilation into the dominant group, an extremely distorted and negative sense of self, and a condition known as "mamuphunyane".[8]

Like other racist ideologies, apartheid constantly sought to cast blacks into inferior positions. The underlying motivation for this was twofold. Firstly, by doing so, apartheid could be seemingly justified. Secondly, if blacks could be convinced of their inferiority, they would more easily accede to their own domination. As Fanon (1980, in Bulhan, 1985) observes, once the internalisation of the inferior status conferred upon blacks in white-dominated societies is complete, racist laws are no longer required to ensure that they submit to their own oppression and exploitation (cf. Thompson, 1984).

It is frequently argued that, given factors such as human agency, attempts by dominant group ideologies to re-create the dominated subject are never completely successful (cf. Thompson, 1984). However, it is unlikely that black children could have been left unaffected by the dominant group's consistent attempts to demonise their group. Grier, who examined the impact of racism on black American children, found that constant exposure to negative portrayals of their group in the printed and electronic media contributed significantly to the negative self-esteem which characterised the psychological profiles of these children (cf. Hickson & Kriegler, in press; Simpson, 1993). Similar findings have been reported in various South African studies.

It is important to note, however, that the black child's self-concept has been impaired not only by the dominant portrayal of blacks in the mass media and school textbooks but also by the manner in which they are treated. The fact that blacks for years have had to contend with the worst living conditions conceivable, and the fact that they were discriminated against in terms of educational facilities certainly played a crucial role in many black children developing an impaired sense of self.

The fact that the apartheid system allowed fanatical white supremacist groupings and their sympathisers to gratuitously assault blacks (frequently with impunity) must also have added to black children's perception of the seeming inferiority of blacks and to a negative sense of self (Setiloane, 1991; Van Niekerk, in Savage, 1981).

The devastating consequences of a predominantly negative sense of self on the emotional well-being and later development of children and communities at large have been widely recorded (cf. Hickson & Kriegler, in press; Simpson, 1993; Bulhan, 1985). In this regard, Fanon's account (in Bulhan, 1985) of the relationship between this negative sense of self and the seemingly senseless intra-community violence which frequently plagues black communities is particularly informative. Sometimes, according to Fanon (in Bulhan, 1985), the pain of socio-economic marginalisation and constant racist deprecation and attacks become so painful that the oppressed find themselves in the position where they have to avenge themselves in order to assuage their pain and maintain a modicum of sanity. However, instead of directing their anger and frustration at those responsible for their bondage and pain, they turn against those who are closest to themselves (i.e. people within their own communities). As Fanon (in Bulhan, 1985) argues:

> The colonized man will manifest [the] aggressiveness which has been deposited in his bones against his own people. This is the period when the niggers beat each other up, and the police and magistrates do not know which way to turn with the astonishing waves of [violent] crime (p. 264).
>
> When the white man or the policeman has the right the livelong day to strike the black, to insult him and make him crawl to them, you will see the black man reaching for his knife at the slightest hostile glance cast at him by another black; for the last resort of the black is to defend his personality vis-à-vis his brother (p. 265).

The personal and social development of large numbers of white children were profoundly distorted by the internalisation of the racist prejudice which apartheid entailed. For example, in a recent research study, Botha and Van Vuuren (1993) report that an alarming number of white children admitted to deriving pleasure from watching televised acts of violence perpetrated against blacks. The media reports of recent years regarding various incidents of violence aimed at blacks (including murder) in which white children were involved, underline the degree to which these children have also internalised the negative construction of blacks and, indeed, the degree to which they have been brutalised by the racism of the apartheid system (cf Hickson & Kriegler, in press; Simpson, 1993; Hirshowitz et al., 1991; Simpson, 1991; Malepa, 1990).

As Bulhan (1985) stresses, oppression does not merely lead to the brutalisation of the oppressed but it inevitably dehumanises those resorting to oppression. The violence required to keep others in a state of submission frequently finds its way back to those perpetrating such violence. In the words of Nell (1990), "... 'colonial masters' pay a high price for the society they have created by internalised violence, turned against the [Self]" (p. 126) and expressed through the comparatively high levels suicide, child abuse and family murders which characterise groups dominating others (cf. Simpson, 1991; Dawes, 1985).

The internalisation of the negative and frequently threatening representation of blacks can perhaps also account for the reported increased levels of anxiety and suicide rates among white children and adolescents during South Africa's transition to democracy (cf. Freeman, 1993). Who can blame these children for their fear and apprehension if, after years of being indoctrinated into believing that blacks are evil demons intent on destabilising this country and eliminating all whites, they are suddenly confronted by the reality of a government which includes blacks and which is headed by a black president?

CHILDREN AND STATE REPRESSION

Many children and youth have been exposed to the multiple traumas of witnessing death, being subjected to indiscriminate arrest and beatings, exile, separation from families and police harassment. For a number of reasons, children and adolescents have also been strategically placed to spearhead the struggle against apartheid (Dawes, 1987), at least most visibly since the 1976 Soweto riots (Chikane, 1986). In fact, Fourie (1990) states that "children and youth have been at the center of much of the civil disobedience and unrest ..." (p. 108). Their protests resounded with the anger of being subjected to the ongoing oppression, inequality and injustice sketched in the previous section. Rather than meeting them with meaningful reform and change, the government responded with force, meted out through broad repressive measures that invaded people's homes, schools and communities at large.

A range of viewpoints have been expressed regarding the effects of political violence on children. Although concern about the sequelae of being exposed to repressive measures is vital, Dawes (1987) cautions against assuming that the effects are uniform for all children. Children are not merely passive respondents to experiences and events, or victims thereof, but are active agents in their world (Hayes, 1991). This assertion may be less valid with younger children (Hayes, 1991), who are more vulnerable to traumatic events (Dawes, 1987). Although these and other mediating factors will be discussed in more detail later in this chapter, Hickson (1992) believes that

> the long-term effects on children living through the horror of violence and general civil war in South Africa are currently unknown. Children are vulnerable ... and usually suffer in silence. What is known is the importance of healing the wounds of their trauma (p. 203).

Thus, it may be more apt to adopt a perspective which errs on the side of caution, tackling the issues head-on.

For the most part, this section will focus upon the effects of direct repression on children, that is, when children themselves are forcibly detained or compelled to flee. Nonetheless, where parents and others are detained or restricted, the results of this "indirect" repressive action can be quite devastating. As already indicated, separation from the primary caregivers as a result of political violence can lead to extreme traumatisation of young children (normally characterised by such symptoms as extreme anxiety, sleeping disorders, etc.). When a parent who has been detained returns home, it is often difficult for family members to re-establish contact. In addition, certain role changes take place in a parent's absence, often placing a tremendous burden on children who are expected to act beyond their age, taking on responsibilities in place of the absent parent. The readjustment that occurs when the family is reunited can be enormous, involving conflict and immense difficulty. Financial difficulties may become an even greater reality where the breadwinner of the family is detained, compounding all the abovementioned problems.

It was not only individuals and families that were affected by the security legislation and the draconian powers given the security forces, but also communities at large. The repressive milieu established a climate of distrust and fear within communities. The degree of suspicion and wariness resulted in a difficulty in establishing trusting relationships and paved the way for the later onset of intra-community violence, or "black-on-black" violence.

How do we begin to address the consequences of repression on South African children? According to the HRC (1989) the ramifications of repression can be fully grasped only with a comprehensive understanding of the conditions and circumstances in which children found themselves. However, the security legislation which gave life to such repressive practices prevented the dissemination of information regarding these practices, which has made it extremely difficult to document effects and outcomes. Organisations have frequently been thwarted in their attempts to adequately describe repressive measures, finding themselves unable to go beyond superficial descriptions which understandably fail to capture the severity and barbaric nature of these occurrences.

Detention

As discussed in the previous chapter, detention entailed the forced removal of children from their family, friends and community, usually followed by placement in solitary confinement or overcrowded communal cells. In both instances the child had to contend with uncertainty, fear, isolation, unhygienic conditions and abuse. Detention of children did not merely entail their incarceration but usually involved police brutality, lack of contact with significant others, and the possibility of rearrest when released (Fourie, 1990). Overt methods of torture were used to "intimidate detainees, to force them to 'confess', to implicate others in political offences", (Amnesty International, 1986, p.3) and to deter continued involvement in political protest. Notwithstanding the fact that most detained children were physically and emotionally assaulted by their captors, the very act of detention was tantamount to torture. At root, this dehumanising process was aimed not only at extracting information but at breaking down a child's self-esteem and personality. The feelings of helplessness and impotence frequently facilitated a confusing relationship between jailer and jailed based on dependency (HRC, 1989).

In a report published by the University of Cape Town, 83% of detainees interviewed reported being tortured. Table 23 below provides a breakdown of the types of torture endured.

Children respond to having been detained in a variety of ways. Physical illness, headaches, stomach pains, diarrhoea, eye problems and concentration difficulties are some of the signs that manifest themselves. According to Bennett (1990), physical injury sustained by children during civil conflict is overshadowed by the psychological ramifications of such conflict. The psychological sequelae and strains of being forcibly uprooted, and exposed to violence in the process, together with the demands of being in a new, unfamiliar environment, undermine children's capacities to cope. Despite the extraordinary resilience shown by certain children, many did not manage (Bennett, 1990). Excessive anxiety, withdrawal, selective contacts (usually with peers), mistrust of adults, apathy, fear, aggression, regression, physical complaints, flights into fantasy and hallucinations are some of the psychological consequences. Specific to detention is a pervasive fear of re-detention, insomnia, nightmares, and the reliving of the experience. These responses approximate Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and are more likely to occur in younger children (Magwaza et al., 1993).

In her work with detained children, Fourie (1990) observed that very few children were able to verbalise their grief and pain, becoming passive, withdrawn and fearful. This is particularly alarming given that upon release children experience great difficulty feeling dependent upon or secure with their parents. Being detained often sharply challenges children's perception of their parents and caregivers who are seen as unable to protect them from such occurrences. This loss of trust and faith in important role models

Table 23: FORMS OF TORTURE INFLICTED ON DETAINEES

%	FORM OF TORTURE
75%	Beatings including punches, kicks, blows with various implements
50%	Forced to crouch or stand on toes for prolonged periods
25%	Electrical shocks
18%	Choking
15%	Chained or manacled for prolonged periods
14%	Bodies suspended in various ways
5%	Hair pulled
3%	Soles beaten

Source: Amnesty International Newsletter (1986) was exacerbated by exposure to a separate set of "role models" in the form of security police who often acted brutally in the name of a perverse legal and law enforcement system that contravened all notions of justice. Owing to the role played by the security forces in black community life, children began to identify them with violent actions rather than with protection.

The loss of connectedness to parents and other suitable adult role models frequently lays the foundation for the development of negative relationships with peer groups through which exposure to criminal activity, substance abuse and school refusal remains an ever-present possibility. However, a distinction is often made between those children who respond adaptively to conditions of repression and civil war and those whose experiences harm their social, physical, moral and mental development (Chikane, 1986). The difference has been linked to the channelling of their energies toward political objectives and the extent to which their belief in some political ideology enables them to understand and explain political violence (Letlaka, 1990; Straker et al., 1992).

While political understandings and affiliations fulfil a protective function for the individual, they may simultaneously thrust the child into a world characterised by internecine violence and destruction. Apropos detention, exposure to repressive phenomena can act as a rite of passage through which children pass and are thereafter unable to return to the life they knew previously. "For these children at war, a significant rite of passage has been enacted, signalling, in effect, the end of childhood" (Hickson, 1992, p. 263). This should not be understood as an idealisation of childhood by its embrace of innocence and naïveté. Rather, it is linked to a reality in which children are placed in positions beyond their level of coping and maturity.

House arrest

House arrest was another popular measure utilised by the apartheid state to curb political activity. Where children were concerned, it was the preferred method of restriction (HRC, 1989). However, unlike detention, in which one's captors can clearly be identified, house arrest gives rise to a great deal of confusion regarding who is ultimately responsible for the loss of freedom and control. The regulation of house arrest results in the disruption of family life, social interaction and schooling. It often places a financial burden on the family. In addition, families are totally exposed to invasion by the security forces who may check on their "charges" at any time of the day or night. According to the HRC (1989) the effects of house arrest are dramatic and severe.

Internal refugees

The incidence of internal refugees was particularly common among teenagers between the ages of 15 and 18 years (HRC, 1989). This phenomenon was a general consequence of repression and resistance, and was proportionately related to these factors. Children who had been detained or placed under house arrest were frequently intimidated by security forces and threatened with the possibility of future action against them and their families. Thus, in an effort to protect themselves and their families, they left their communities to lead a nomadic life. For these children, basic survival needs were paramount, with little certainty of their next meal or place of rest. They often experienced a profound sense of disconnectedness owing to the drastic manner in which they were removed from familiar interpersonal and social networks. Not only did primary support become an impossibility, but any chance of schooling was negated. Due to the uncertainty of their lifestyle and the loss of contact with significant others, these children experienced tremendous anxiety, depression and interpersonal problems.

Exiles

> The large-scale exodus of black South Africans from their homeland, over a period of more than twenty-five years, is unparalleled in history. It is a reflection of the pervasively negative effect of the system of apartheid on the black people of the country (Majodina, 1989, p. 87).

The exile experience basically represents an enforced and brutal rupture in an individual's personal history. This rupture in continuity embodies an important obstacle to the development of a meaningful and positive sense of identity. For Majodina (1989), "[both] political repression and exile tend to distort the normal development of socialisation in a child or young person" (p. 92).

Some of the more important consequences of life in exile (as a result of apartheid) include the following:

- A pervasive feeling of being in transit: a profound sense of loss of security. This sense of loss is made worse if the conditions of life in the new environment are difficult.
- Feelings of guilt.
- A range of more severe psychological problems and disorders. Individuals suddenly forced into exile without the opportunity of preparation are at a greater risk of suffering from these disorders than those who had anticipated exile. In this regard, Majodina makes a distinction between "anticipatory" and "acute" flights into exile.

With the unbanning of political organisations in 1990 many exiles were able to return to South Africa and resume life within their native country. Although the prospect of returning home was for many a lifelong dream that was thought would never materialise, it raised a number of difficulties. Other than the implications for individuals making the transition, families and communities have been challenged by the process of repatriation.

CHILDREN AND COMMUNITY VIOLENCE

Any discussion regarding intra-community or so-called "black-on-black" violence is fraught with difficulties and complications. As mentioned earlier, the term regularly conjures up pejorative associations that often reinforce racist beliefs and value systems. Adam and Moodley (1992) detail a number of explanations that have been invoked to explain the spiral of violence, such as

i. the Nationalist government's double agenda and an unreformed police force;

ii. a "third force" with the aim of derailing the negotiation process;

iii. Inkatha-ANC rivalry;

iv. the remnants of the armed struggle and the continuation of the philosophy underlying the armed struggle, namely to render the country ungovernable;

v. the legacy of apartheid; and

vi. sanctions.

However, they caution against emphasising any one perspective over another. In their view, to adequately account for the present levels of violence, an examination of the rural-urban divide, inter-generational conflicts, differential living conditions, social status and heightened competition must be included. Some of the difficulty in attributing the violence to one or other occurrence reflects, in part, how perplexing these times have been. This is in direct contrast to the other historical stages through which South Africa has passed.

During the apartheid era and the backlash it spawned, the parameters of the conflict and the participants were far more clearly defined. Thus, Petersen et al. (in press) state that the violence experienced during these times has been especially traumatising in that there has been no clear pattern as to the onset and perpetrators of violence, which creates extreme uncertainty and unpredictability and, as a consequence, tremendous stress.

Be that as it may, it becomes increasingly important, if not morally binding, to situate understandings of this violence within a historical frame. According to Petersen et al. (in press), the stress normally associated with public violence is significantly aggravated by the fact that the violence to which children are currently exposed is *superimposed* on the violence of apartheid, which has already deprived black communities of essential social, psychological and economic resources. Although certain authors trace the beginnings of intra-community violence to approximately 1990 and attribute its workings to forces of destabilisation (HRC, 1993b), the apartheid ideology, together with the counter-violence and repression it brought on, has sowed the seeds for such occurrences. Through manipulation, the National Party government was able to exploit situational variants resulting in intra-community conflict that was ultimately destructive for individuals, families and communities. The resulting vigilante groups, witdoeke and "reform puppets" were the outcome of a broad plan that provided the ongoing justification for apartheid rule.

The fact that South African children have been exposed to inordinately high levels of violence cannot be disputed. Magwaza et al. (1993) found that a significant majority of the children included in their study (84% to be exact) appeared to be overly preoccupied with violence. The effect of such exposure, however, remains contentious. Certain researchers proffer conservative estimates. For example, certain studies conducted by Dawes (1994a) found that while most children exhibit immediate emotional reactions such as fear, anxiety and shock following incidents of political violence, only "a relatively small proportion (usually less than 10%) develop disabling longer-term emotional reactions" (p. 183). On the other hand, many believe that public violence is extremely stressful to children (Beukes & Heyns, 1994; INR, 1993; Schmidt, 1993; Smith & Holford, 1993), impacting negatively on their psychological and social well-being. This, in part, can be explained by the developmental constraints inherent in childhood. For Frankel (1993), violence by, or exacted upon, children is particularly pernicious because, unlike adults, children lack the emotional resources and psychological maturity to deal with such trauma. In a study of Sowetan children, Allwood (1987) found that being exposed to high levels of public violence led to many of them displaying symptoms such as emotional detachment, mental distress, depression, enuresis, selective amnesia, psychosomatic problems and developmental disorders. In addition, public violence leads to anger, bitterness and despair among its targets and to the dehumanisation of both victim and perpetrator (Allwood, 1990).

Furthermore, the incidence of "black-on-black" violence is experienced as far more stressful than other forms of violence (e.g. state-inspired violence). This may be for a number of reasons. Firstly, the difficulty in readily finding an explanation for the occurrence of such violence imbues it with an unfamiliar quality that makes for stress and anxiety (Dawes, 1990). Secondly, the more one is able to identify with both victims or perpetrators of violence, the more stressful such exposure becomes.

One specific outgrowth of the unprecedented levels of violence in this country is that violence has come to be expected and has, to a large degree, been normalised. The perception that the use of force and violence is the only means of resolving conflict is commonplace. This reflects and results in a desensitisation to violence and a loss of respect for human life, even among children. A significant number of children emerge from violent experiences with an inclination to being violent themselves (Frankel, 1993; Klaasen, 1990). Dawes (1994a) found that children exposed to incidents of political violence are more inclined than others to emulate such acts. These findings are consistent with Bandura's Social Learning Theory which predicts that continued exposure to violent role models during political conflict will likely lead to imitation and acceptance of violent conduct. Malepa (1990) provides an example of a three-year-old who could give step-by-step instructions on how to make a petrol bomb. An important consequence of intra-community political violence is that opposing groups become increasingly polarised as exposure to this violence increases (Dawes, 1990), leading to an ever-increasing spiral of violence with ever-mounting casualties.

Furthermore, children are often abducted into training for armed conflict and are recruited into partisan armies (NCRC, 1994; Bennett, 1990; Gultig & Hart, 1990; Klaasen, 1990), which impacts very negatively on their development and predisposes them to problems ranging form drug abuse to anti-social behaviour (DNHPD, 1993; O'Brien, 1993; Bennett, 1990). The current high levels of violence have in fact given rise to a strange phenomenon where "children armed to the teeth are actually going out looking for war. Young 'comrades' who are in danger will suddenly and inexplicably seek out those who threaten them" (Hickson, 1992, p. 262). One possible explanation is that the stress of being afraid (even the social injunctions preventing emotions, such as fear and anxiety) becomes too overwhelming and there is a need to stare death in the face, almost in an attempt to compensate for, or to put an end to, such feelings. These responses are quite normal when placed within the context of war. Straker & Moosa (1992) comments upon the utility of aggressive responses to trauma during conflict situations, which function adaptively for the individual. Such responses are in direct contrast to the anxiety and fearfulness displayed by individuals whose trauma occurs within a peaceful setting.

Despite the possibility of the negative consequences of being "conscripted", at times, the role of children within the armed struggle has been glorified. The focus has been on their heroics and capacity to make sacrifices for the "cause", with little or no attention given to the effect of their involvement in violence and perpetration of violent actions (Allwood, 1987). For example, Klaasen (1990) found that children who participated in incidents of "necklacing" showed signs of extreme psychological distress leading to drug abuse and institutionalisation (Klaasen, 1990).

The pervasive climate of violence in South Africa has been the result of deeper social processes. In Hickson's (1992) view, the propensity toward violence is quite understandable given that "in a violent and discriminatory society such as a South Africa, where children have been victimized ... feelings of powerlessness and alienation [among children] have resulted" (Hickson, 1992, p. 261). This alienation has given rise to high levels of normlessness: a situation where previously acceptable standards of behaviour no longer prevail, and unacceptable behavioral standards come into operation as coping mechanisms (ibid., p. 261).

Nonetheless, the recent shift in the political context has resulted in the scapegoating of many of these children. Previously, random violent occurrences directed at crippling the apartheid system and rendering the country ungovernable were lauded: today this is not the case. Consequently, youth are criticised for their lawlessness instead of recognised for their role in defending communities (Garson, 1992). These sentiments are poignantly expressed that "once the pride of the struggle, hoisted on a cloud of clenched fists, youth have been transformed into a scourge" (p. 10). This situation cannot merely be reduced to an issue of perception but warrants a complex examination of how "what were once innocent, grassroots initiatives to quell violence [have become] vicious and dangerous power struggles of mafia-like proportions". In a sense SDUs have become gun-toting groups that inspire fear and wield a great deal of power, far removed from their previously held role of protectors. Implicit is the blurring between legitimate defence measures employed by communities and criminal violence – distinctions which have been confounded by our collective history.

The turning toward violent pursuits can be further contextualised. Within the machinations of South African society, what options are open to young people who are constantly faced with the possibility of unemployment, boredom, lack of recreational facilities, the lack of jobs, gutter education, violence and ongoing poverty, which serve to confirm such bleakness? A wider social malaise that stretches beyond violence has presented a bleakness and aridity which no-one should have to tolerate. Thuggery and gang warfare become increasingly attractive to those who feel life and society have foreclosed on them. Often there is the perpetuation of a vicious cycle in that children in the struggle were forced to forgo what little opportunities and social prospects existed for them. According to Dawes (1994b) there is a

> ...risk that in the absence of other sources of identity affirmation, and in the context of socio-economic deprivation, young people with few life chances who have been actively engaged in political

> violence may carry forward a violent career in order both to survive and to retain a sense of worth (p. 216).

The scenarios sketched above need not be entirely portentous. Research conducted in Northern Ireland with regard to the effects of political violence does not suggest a decline in children's moral standards as a result of political violence per se (Dawes, 1994b, p. 204). Whether political violence will have an influence on children's moral development depends on a number of interrelated factors. These include the following:

i. the political and economic contexts within which political violence occurs;
ii. the duration and form of the conflict;
iii. whether those affected by political conflict are the products of an essentially democratic or repressive culture;
iv. the types of conflict in which young people are involved; and
v. the individual life histories of those exposed to political violence.

It is not only those caught in the midst of violence who are affected. Violence affects all people in South Africa via a constant barrage from newspapers, TV and billboards (Allwood, 1987; Frankel, 1993). Although "... the people who are no doubt most affected are those living in township situations in which violence is endemic" (Frankel, 1993, p. 1), children living in relatively stable communities are also affected by public violence. Frankel (1993) understands this in terms of the following:

i. restrictions on movement brought about by actual or anticipated public violence;
ii. the inability of significant adults in their environment to provide comfort and security;
iii. the manner of socialisation, as well as the manner in which the phenomenon of public violence is explained; and

iv. the graphic media images of the most disturbing incidents of public violence which confront South Africans on a daily basis.

In addition, the current process of "transition has created much uncertainty [for everyone] ... It also seems that a number of people see themselves as trapped or see that the future is threatening to them in some way. This evokes, in simple terms, a 'fight or flight' response ..." (Frankel, 1993, p. 4). In our society there are very high levels of anxiety, depression, stress and general psychological turmoil.

Further considerations

The consequences of public violence extend beyond those discussed above. O'Brien (1993) mentions

i. destruction of dwellings, the loss of belongings and consequent displacement;

ii. death or injury of family members;

iii. loss of employment and income; and

iv. disruption of health services and schooling.

The intra-community violence which has plagued South Africa over the last few years has been responsible for the death and injury of an unacceptably high number of people, including children (cf. CPA, 1993). However, these figures cannot sufficiently convey the broad implications of these experiences. Beyond the individual effects which involve disability, stress and trauma, families and particularly children are adversely affected in several ways.

Firstly, for working-class families (who are most frequently the victims of public violence), the loss or injury of adult and adolescent members of the family inevitably spells a loss of vital family income, which has far-reaching implications for child dependants. This has led to the exacerbation of already high levels of poverty (DCFWS, 1993; Madela & Poggenpoel, 1993; O'Brien, 1993), which in turn, has led to dramatic increases in the levels of malnutrition among the children from violence-afflicted areas (DNHPD, 1993; NCRC, 1994).

Secondly, a great deal of violence has entailed the razing and burning of homes and dwellings (Madela & Poggenpoel, 1993; O'Brien, 1993). According to research conducted by the NCRC (1994), an estimated 46 664 children people were displaced as a result of political violence. Apart from the obvious emotional stress of starting life anew in a foreign environment, displacement has frequently led to the proliferation of refugee camps, which in spite of providing shelter and minimal needs are often hazardous due to the lack of adequate sanitation, the spread of disease and conflict over limited resources (NCRC, 1994; O'Brien, 1993).

Thirdly, such displacement has led to large numbers of children being separated from their parents, ultimately finding their way into the company of countless bands of homeless children currently found on the streets. Other children, unable to cope with the stress of constantly witnessing the death and destruction haunting their communities, coupled with their families' inability to protect them, have simply run away from their home.

Despite the ostensible abatement in overt acts of public violence, many of these children are still "on the run". They are frequently found in the ranks of the "street children" inundating the major cities of South Africa (Mkhize, 1993; Simpson, 1993). Their life is plagued by misery, disease and starvation. In an effort to survive, many of these children fall prey to abuse and violence from businessmen eager to make a profit from a cheap and readily available labour force. Others take to criminal activities such as theft, drug trafficking and prostitution and frequently land up in jail (DNHPD, 1993). A large number of homeless children have frequently in the past also found themselves placed in "protective custody" in South African jails by a police force ill-equipped to deal with this ever-escalating problem — thereby adding to their trauma (DNHPD, 1993; Schmidt, 1993).

Public health services constitute a further casualty of the conditions which have plagued many South African communities over the last few years. Generally, health services have not only been disrupted by the destruction of already inadequate health facilities (Editorial, 1988), but are also frequently located in "enemy" territory and, therefore, inaccessible to certain sections of the public. This state of affairs has led not only to the death of many child victims of violence, who could not receive much-needed medical attention, but also to dramatic increases in the occurrence of preventable diseases among children (DNHPD, 1993; NCRC, 1994; O'Brien, 1993; Stavrou & Shongwe, 1989).

Similarly, schools have also been affected by violence. A study by Gultig and Hart in the Pietermaritzburg area in 1990 revealed that some schools had a drop-out rate of between 25% and 50%. A few schools, in fact, reported higher drop-out rates. Obviously apartheid education and poverty played some part in these appalling figures. However, more than 77% of the children approached cited public violence as the major reason for not attending school. Indeed, schools themselves have often become veritable war zones with schoolchildren from opposing political backgrounds clashing on the school grounds, and school principals refusing to register children from certain sectors of the communities at their schools (Gultig & Hart, 1990).

MEDIATING FACTORS

There is no direct causal relationship between the occurrence of violence and subsequent reactions on the part of children. Indeed, most of the leading social scientists working in the field of political violence agree that the impact of public violence on children is influenced by the interaction of a number of intra-individual and situational factors (Gibson, 1991). These include the child's age, temperament and past experiences, the duration of the violence, the availability and quality of support systems and the child's perception of the violence to which s/he has been exposed (Dawes, 1994a; Smith & Holford, 1993; Gibson, 1991; Dawes & Tredoux, 1990; Swartz & Levett, 1989).

Although these factors are presented in a linear fashion, they often act together in a multitude of permutations which differ from person to person. Therefore reactions to public violence will vary from one child to another. Furthermore, this list is not exhaustive as there is still a great deal to discover about what helps people cope in adverse situations.

The physical, social and material consequences of the violence

Research indicates that to a large extent the degree of trauma caused by political violence depends on the physical, social and material consequences which follow in its wake. For example, children who suffer physical injury as a result of violence are generally more distressed by such violence than other children who emerge from the experience physically unscathed. This is largely due to the fact that physical injury is generally accompanied by pain, loss of schooling and frequently permanent disability, which may have far-reaching implications for the child's psychological well-being (Dawes, 1994a; Netshiombo, 1993). In addition, Smith and Holford (1994) state that the death of parents due to political violence also increases the likelihood of children being traumatised. In these instances, the stress associated with violence is inevitably accompanied by several other stressors, such as the possible loss of the nuclear family unit, a change in caregivers, and a change of school and neighbourhood.

The nature of the violence

Research also reveals that lack of clarity with regard to violence — who is involved and why — significantly augments the trauma normally associated with political violence (Dawes, 1994a). For example, several recent studies have found that children react more negatively to intra-community violence — which is typically characterised by poorly defined divisions between the "us" and the "them" and between "our territory" and "their territory" — than to state repression where such boundaries were more clearly demarcated (Dawes, 1990; Straker & Moosa, 1992; Gibson, 1989).

Socio-economic status

According to Netshiombo (1993) and Gibson (1989), low socio-economic status generally correlates positively with post-traumatic stress symptoms in children who have been exposed to political violence. Children in poorer circumstances are generally more exposed to various other stressors, particularly those arising from structural violence. As a result, children from this group who are exposed to political violence are more likely to be traumatised by their exposure to public violence (cf. Mason & Killian, in press; Letlaka, 1990).

The child's age

While Skinner and Swartz (1989) found no age-related differences in terms of symptom presentation following exposure to political violence, several other studies indicate that children of different age groups are differentially vulnerable to the effects of political violence (see, for example, Dawes, 1990, 1994a). According to Dawes (1994a), children between the ages of five and thirteen years appear to cope better with political violence and its attendant problems than children falling outside this age range. Furthermore, older children are more likely to develop anti-social behaviour patterns after exposure to traumatic incidents of violence, whereas younger children are more likely to display PTSD (Magwaza et al., 1993). These age-related vicissitudes are largely a function of developmental differences in social, emotional and cognitive capacities (Dawes, 1994a).

The child's temperament

Children who possess an essentially positive temperament appear to cope better with incidents of political violence than children with a fundamentally negative temperament (Dawes, 1994a; Gibson, 1991; Dawes, 1987). This is most probably related to the fact that children with easy temperaments generally possess good social skills and have contact with at least one warm, supportive parent. Nonetheless, though they appear to be more resilient, even these children tend to become increasingly vulnerable as their exposure to violence increases (Dawes, 1990).

Passive vs active orientation

Children who have an active coping style appear more resilient in the face of political violence than children with an essentially passive coping style. For example, during the period of grand apartheid it was observed that children who were political activists were much less likely to exhibit post-traumatic stress symptoms after exposure to incidents of public violence than children who were not at all involved in the "struggle" (Dawes, 1994a; Gibson, 1991; Netshiombo, 1993; Dawes, 1987).

Straker & Moosa (1994), however, stresses that while engagement in political struggles may have alleviated personal stress in the short term, it was in itself potentially pathogenic. This assertion is possibly based on the assumption that for many young activists, engagement in the "struggle" against apartheid, was frequently accompanied by violence — either counter-violence or the violence of state-repression. Given that exposure to successive incidents of violence reduces the resilience of the individual (Netshiombo, 1993), this significantly increased the likelihood of these individuals presenting with stress-related symptoms at a later stage.

Recent research conducted in the Middle East reveals that non-violent activism or "required helpfulness", such as assisting others during difficult times, greatly enhances the resilience of children exposed to situations of civil unrest (cf. Dawes, 1990).

The child's gender

With two exceptions, namely, Magwaza et al. (1993) and Aysen and Nieuwoudt (1992), studies show a clearly discernible relationship between the child's gender and reactions to incidents of political violence (Dawes, 1994a; Netshiombo, 1993). Most studies reveal that while pre-adolescent boys generally present with more stress-related symptoms after exposure to public violence than their female counterparts, this situation is reversed during adolescence. Consequently, adolescent girls are more likely to exhibit symptoms such as depression and anxiety in situations characterised by high levels of public violence. This sensitivity is thought to be related to differential processes of socialisation (Dawes, 1990). In our society, boys are generally taught to be "strong", while girls are allowed to be sensitive and show their emotions, even "negative" emotions such as fear. Since little girls are therefore allowed to give vent to, or display, their fears and rely on the adults in their environment for support, it can be expected that they will not be affected as adversely by political violence as boys who are expected to repress emotions such as fear and anxiety. At the time of adolescence, however, this pattern of gender socialisation begins to work in the favour of boys who by now have learnt that anxiety can to a certain extent be controlled if they actively try to deal with that which threatens them. In the case of political violence, therefore, boys would be much more likely than girls to actively attempt to combat or oppose such violence.

The fact that adolescent girls appear to be more symptom-prone than boys during periods of public violence, according to Netshiombo (1993), could also be a consequence of their emerging sexuality which places them at greater risk during periods of civil unrest. Indeed, this observation is convincingly substantiated by Simpson's (1991) observation that the levels of sexual assault against pubescent and older girls escalated by as much as 23% during 1990 when intra-violence showed a sharp increase (cf. NCRC, 1994).

The availability and quality of support systems

Children who can rely on the support of parents and/or older siblings when exposed to incidents of political violence appear to be more resilient than those who do not enjoy such support (Dawes, 1994a; Swartz & Levett, 1989). This is particularly true for pre-school children (Netshiombo, 1993) who generally do not have many other effective social support systems, such as schools and peer groups, to substitute for the family when it is disrupted. Research by Simpson (1993) and Letlaka (1990) reveals that very young children's separation from their primary caregivers during, or following, incidents of political violence significantly increases the traumatising effects of such violence on these children (cf. Smith & Holford, 1993).

However, in a relatively recent study, Dawes & Tredoux (1990) found that while the presence of primary caregivers during or following exposure to incidents of violence increases their resilience, the quality of such support is an equally – if not more – important determinant of how children cope with violence and its attendant problems. Both Netshiombo (1993) and Dawes (1990) found that children whose caregivers are unduly or excessively distressed by public violence are more likely to present with stress-related symptoms after exposure to incidents of public violence. This finding is supported by studies conducted in various other countries which reveal that displaced children presenting with multiple post-stress symptoms are more likely to have mothers suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (Dawes, 1990). Furthermore, as Gibson (1989) reveals, children who deal best with traumatic incidents have parents who are confident in their role as parents, display concern for their children's well-being and allow them a measure of self-direction in their everyday activities.

Also, with regard to the mediating effects of social support, studies by Gibson (1991) reveal that the availability of adequate health care facilities for children who had just been exposed to incidents of political violence can substantially reduce the traumatising effect of such violence. The school appears to be another important source of social support. According to Gibson (1989), the school, by virtue of the calming influence of ongoing everyday routine which it offers, can greatly enhance the resilience of children exposed to public violence. Moreover, in the school situation, child victims of violence are exposed to peers who often share similar experiences, which can help them to deal with their fears and concerns.

Past experiences

Past experiences of public violence also determine the impact on children in that exposure to incidents of public violence can either "sensitise" or "steel" the child to current incidents of violence (Dawes, 1994a). However, this appears to be largely dependent on the quality of the child's relationship with his or her primary caregiver. Dawes (1994a), for example, reports that if children enjoyed sound relationships with their primary caregivers when previously exposed to political violence, this exposure tends to have a "steeling" effect when they are once again exposed to such violence. On the other hand, where primary relationships had earlier been problematic, past exposure to incidents of political violence tends to increase their vulnerability to the effects of subsequent exposure to political violence.

The child's appraisal of violence

It has been found that if children can make sense of the violence to which they are exposed, they are much less likely to be traumatised by it than if violent encounters are "incomprehensible" (Mkhize, 1993; Gibson, 1991; Letlaka, 1990; Straker & Moosa, 1992; Dawes, 1987). According to Dawes and Tredoux (1990), this is one of the reasons children generally experience intra-community violence as more stressful than state-inspired violence. Pre-1994 state-sponsored violence against blacks was always congruent with the state's ideology of apartheid, and therefore relatively logical or comprehensible to the child. On the other hand, until recently, very few social scientists (let alone children) have had any ready explanation for the internecine violence which has plagued black communities over the last few years in particular (Kane-Berman, 1993), hence rendering it more stressful and anxiogenic to children. Since meanings are largely mediated by "what is said", prevailing discourses on public violence profoundly influence children's understanding and consequent reactions to the phenomenon (Dawes, 1994a). It is for this reason that Mkhize (1993) argues that media accounts of political violence play such an important role in how children respond to violence.

CONCLUSION

By way of concluding this discussion, three points need to be emphasised. Firstly, while it cannot be denied that most of the mediating factors identified above could, in the short term, influence the manner in which exposure to political violence affects children, thus far insufficient research has been conducted into the long-term action of these factors. Will a longitudinal study of the children presently exposed to public violence find twenty years from now that children who were "buffered" by factors such as stable, middle-class environments, supportive caregivers and minimal (as opposed to prolonged) exposure to violence have been unaffected by such violence? In this regard, Dawes (1990) states that there is clearly "a need in South Africa for more ... longitudinal ... work, which will help address the unanswered question of the long-term sequelae of exposure [to political violence]" (p. 20).

Firstly, various studies are already surfacing which show that the "buffering" effects of these factors are limited and can be significantly undermined by a variety of other factors. For example, recent research reveals that the longer children's exposure to violence, the greater the possibility that the mediating effects of factors such as warm caregiver support and an adequate or satisfactory understanding of the origins and functions of such violence will be diminished (Dawes, 1990, 1994a).

Secondly, while it is acknowledged that some of the factors discussed in this section might mediate the impact that public violence has on children, they do not protect children from all the pernicious effects of such violence. Indeed, to the extent that political violence is frequently accompanied by, among others, the destruction of schools and homes, the death and injury of family members and malnutrition (NCRC, 1994), it can be seen as consistently destructive (albeit to varying degrees) vis-á-vis the development of the child.

Thirdly, in the South African context, a number of the mediating factors identified above as protecting children against the pathogenic effects of violence have systematically been eroded by years of colonisation, apartheid and intra-community warfare. Here the disintegration of the majority of children's support systems, such as the family, the neighbourhood and the school, immediately comes to mind. For the majority of black children in South Africa, Netshiombo (1993, p. 13) observes:

> [there] are no safe environments left ... fathers beat up mothers ... the streets are violent ... [as are the] schools ... Families are stretched to the limit. They may not have the time or the energy to protect and comfort a child ... [An] emotionally troubled child puts a further strain on already traumatised family groups ... Parents ... become unable to fulfil the role of parent, let alone compensate for the loss of their child's feeling of security, and the possible loss of a brother ... or a home.

ENDNOTES

1. It is perhaps for this reason that the inquiry's efforts to obtain data from the South African police regarding the effects of public violence on children were largely futile.
2. See Giliomee and Schlemmer (1989) for a fairly detailed discussion of the bulwark of laws which girded this deprivation and violence.
3. Several government departments and NGOs were approached for statistics in this regard. The only statistical information that could be obtained is that approximately 10 000 children are currently active in SDUs in the Pretoria-Witwatersrand-Vereeniging area (official of the Department of Safety and Security, Pretoria-Witwatersrand-Vereeniging, personal communication, 1994). This figure was not verified.
4. This, as the HRC (1990) observes, constitutes one of the worst forms of torture in itself.
5. Indeed, Beukes and Heyns (1994) found that even when security force abuses are much less likely to happen than, for example, ten years ago, more than 50% of adolescents still exhibit extreme fear of the security forces.
6. These include the following dimensions: what constitutes an incident of political violence, the time-frame employed in each study, the depiction of certain geographical areas, and the use of various databases for data collection.
7. Although the impact of all forms of violence on children is acknowledged, criminal violence has often travelled on the back of political violence.

CHAPTER 5

SURVEY OF ORGANISATIONS PROVIDING SERVICES TO CHILDREN

Norman Duncan & Brian Rock

During the inquiry a national survey of organisations providing services to children affected by violence was conducted, aimed at:

i. obtaining a comprehensive picture of how public violence affects the livelihood of South African children;

ii. establishing the nature and scope of services currently available to children affected by violence;

iii. determining the need for additional services; and

iv. gathering views on priorities and suggestions for improved service delivery mechanisms.

SURVEY FINDINGS

Services

A total of 103 organisations participated in this survey. The profile of responding organisations presented in Table 24 reflects the prominence of referral and counselling services. While many of these organisations did cater directly for children affected by public violence, they were the first port of call, so to speak, for such children, and had expertise and experience in these matters. Beyond reactive or curative interventions, these organisations provided some preventive focus in the education of children about violence.

Longer-term actions such as children's rights activism and research were, however, seemingly less prominent in the repertoire of services described. It is also important to note that the majority of organisations polled appeared to concentrate on welfare, social work and psychological models of service delivery.

An interesting feature is the large number of organisations (36%) who claimed to deal with children who had committed violent acts. The exact nature of these services was not clear from the survey.

Table 24: ORGANISATIONS PARTICIPATING IN THE SURVEY

N	%	Type of organisation
19	18.4	Child welfare society
13	12.6	Children's home
12	11.7	Education-related organisation[1]
10	9.7	Child guidance clinic
10	9.7	Regional/central state health/welfare department
8	7.8	Hospital department[2]
7	6.8	University department[3]
6	5.8	Place of safety
5	4.9	Church organisation[4]
5	4.9	Other[5]
4	3.9	Street children's project
3	2.9	Community-based organisation/project[6]
1	1.0	Women's shelter

[1] Includes schools, nonformal education programmes, creches and educare centres

[2] Includes casualty, social work, psychiatry and paediatrics departments

[3] Includes social work, psychiatry and psychology departments & affiliated projects

[4] Includes church and 'para-church' welfare and youth organisations

[5] Includes legal assistance, research & crisis-counselling organisations

[6] Many other organisations also described themselves as community-based; however in these three cases this was the only description given.

Of the organisations polled, 73% reported that they engaged in one or other form of counselling. Of these, 90% involved individual face-to-face contact, 65% family counselling, 56% group work, 38% telephone counselling, 18% psychiatric team work. Most personnel engaged in these activities were social workers, followed by psychologists and volunteers. Psychiatric nurses, occupational therapists and child care workers were also included. The types of counselling offered varied widely, with more pragmatic approaches being used by those organisations intent on referring the child to other services.

Number of children served

The following factors warrant caution in the interpretation of the data:

i. Organisations were invited to provide estimates if they did not have exact figures available, and the results should be interpreted as estimations.

ii. As many as 50% of the organisations were unable to provide any approximate number. This was due to an inability to provide this information timeously (one organisation wrote: "We can't show a 5-year pattern without about 2 months work") and the lack of any statistical information generally.

iii. Organisations differed markedly in the services they provide, and the data submitted was not separated out on this basis. Thus, figures from residential institutions serving a relatively small number of clients very intensively were combined with those from educational programmes whose contact with larger numbers of clients is more fleeting.

iv. The figures given for 1994 were supposed to be for the first four months of the year only but many organisations provided estimates for the entire year.

The total number of children served by the organisations participating in the survey almost doubled from approximately 45 000 in 1990 to 85 000 in 1993. This may be due, in part, to an escalation in violence over this period, but may have occurred because certain organisations were founded after 1990 (or only provided estimates for more recent years).

The range of children served by the participating organisations per year varied greatly, ranging from 2 to 26 000. This reflects differences in the nature of the services provided and structural differences in the organisations providing these services. Certain organisations operated nationally with numerous branches, whereas others were small initiatives catering for one locality or district. Half of the organisations encountered fewer than 200 children in any one year; 10% dealt with fewer than 20. Children affected by violence constituted one third of all children seen in half the organisations polled; 30% thought it to be as high as one in every two children.

While, on the one hand, this may point to very high levels of violence against children in society, it is also indicative of the nature of the work done by these organisations. All dealt with children who were in need of assistance and had thus, almost by definition, suffered some form of violence.

Respondents varied in the degree to which they were willing to contemplate the role of structural violence in their clients' lives. One respondent remarked that "Coloured and black patients are all victims of apartheid", while another wrote "Our services are for poor children, not victims of violence".

When organisations were asked how many clients were seen by them specifically because they were the victims of violence, estimates dropped considerably, with almost half saying that only around 1 in 10 of the children they served had violence as a presenting complaint.

The proportion of clients who were thought to be victims of political or public violence was even smaller, with more than half the organisations estimating that fewer than 4% of the children they see are victims of such violence, despite the wide definition of political violence given in the questionnaire:

> Violence and intimidation, whether or not committed, presumably committed or alleged to have been committed to achieve any particular political aims, including the violence associated with political faction conflict, forced removals and any other forms of violence which, in so far as can be ascertained, are the products of political factors.

Kinds of violence experienced by children

As illustrated in Table 25, being the target of, or witnessing, domestic violence was by far the most common kind of violence reported, with 80% of organisations claiming to work with children in these circumstances. Other forms of violence that could be considered, in many instances, as domestic in origin, such as being abandoned or running away from home, also figure prominently. Moreover, most of the forms of violence mentioned by organisations within the "other" category were of a domestic nature: being neglected by parents; dysfunctional families; family murder; harsh parental discipline (hidings, threats, disparagement). Structural violence, however, was reported less frequently, whereas overt political violence was thought to be more common.

The effect of violence

The vast majority of organisations (88%) reported some form of psychological trauma in the children they had contact with. As many as 60% of organisations also reported dealing with children who had suffered physical injury. Again these results are in part determined by the nature of the sample. In a more medically oriented sample the relative importance of psychological and physical trauma may well have been quite different.

Table 25: PERCENTAGE OF ORGANISATIONS WHO DEAL WITH CHILDREN WHO HAVE BEEN AFFECTED BY DIFFERENT KINDS OF VIOLENCE

% reporting	Mean % affected	Kind of violence
89.3	33.49	Being the target of domestic violence (e.g. child abuse, incest)
79.8	32.06	Witnessing domestic violence (e.g. spouse abuse)
74.7	25.33	Being abandoned by parents
66.3	12.61	Running away from home
64.6	21.53	The family being homeless
57.8	25.81	Witnessing social violence (e.g. gang fights)
56.1	16.57	Death or disability of a parent or family member as result of violence
48.2	25.24	Witnessing criminal violence (e.g. robbery)
43.4	36.48	Witnessing violence between different political groupings
41.0	18.52	Being the target of criminal violence (e.g. being robbed)
40.2	20.74	Committing violent acts against other people
39.8	24.76	Witnessing violent police or Defence Force action
37.8	28.86	The family being displaced
33.7	17.67	Being the target of social violence (e.g. being in a gang fight)
28.0	29.69	Being the target of violence between different political groupings
23.2	31.58	Being the target of violent police or Defence Force action
20.8	26.00	Other
17.3	9.83	Being abducted

Note: % reporting is the % of organisations who report this kind of violence affecting some of their clients. Mean % affected is the mean estimated % of clients affected by each kind of violence.

Psychological "trauma" can of course take many forms, and several organisations attempted to describe the psychological effect of violence on the children in more detail. Factors mentioned included emotional stress, learning disabilities, low self-esteem, peer rejection and depression.

Short-term priorities

Short-term priorities fall into three categories (see Table 26):

i. improved co-ordination of services (forming a national network of all organisations dealing with child victims of violence and framing a national mental health policy);

ii. increased and extended psychological services (extending psychological services to the less privileged, parenting skills training, psychological counselling); and

iii. meeting material needs (providing shelter).

To a certain extent, the high premium placed on psychological services is probably a function of the nature of the sample, but it is nevertheless interesting that respondents were willing to prioritise psychological interventions over, for instance, medical services and

Table 26: WHAT SHOULD BE DONE IN THE SHORT TERM?

		Percentage endorsement			
N	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**Type of action**
96	0,0	17,7	25,0	**57,3**	**Extending psychological services to less privileged**
88	1,1	19,3	28,4	**51,1**	Shelter
95	2,1	20,0	29,5	**48,4**	Forming a national network of organisations
96	2,1	16,7	35,4	**45,8**	Parenting skills training
93	0,0	21,5	35,5	**43,0**	Psychological counselling
91	2,2	23,1	34,1	**40,7**	Framing a national mental health policy
93	0,0	18,3	**41,9**	39,8	Coping skills training
89	2,2	20,2	**39,3**	38,2	Training court officials and police
92	1,1	20,7	**43,5**	34,8	Medical services
95	0,0	25,3	**41,1**	33,7	Training teachers and other lay counsellors
95	1,1	17,9	**47,4**	33,7	Improved detection of incidents of violence
93	3,2	18,3	**45,2**	33,3	Research into the best treatment strategies
88	3,4	27,3	**38,6**	30,7	Better placement services
91	3,3	26,4	**40,7**	29,7	Control measures on drugs/alcohol
86	3,5	**36,0**	31,4	29,1	Feeding schemes
93	3,2	22,6	**45,2**	29,0	Research into the prevalence of violence
88	4,5	**39,8**	35,2	20,5	Legal aid
92	4,3	**39,1**	**39,1**	17,4	Media campaigns about the needs of victims

Note: 1 = Not important 2 = Important 3 = Very important 4 = Top priority.
Highest row percentage frequencies in bold

feeding schemes. It also raises the question as to how, in view of the apparent scarcity of professional psychologists, these services will be provided. The prominence given by participating organisations to the co-ordination of services may provide part of the answer.

Several respondents felt it was impossible to rate the importance of different interventions in such an abstract way. As one respondent put it: "Food and shelter are very important to the hungry and homeless, unnecessary to the fed and already sheltered." However, even with the best possible targeting of resources it is certain that existing resources will not be sufficient to meet all needs.

Medium- to long-term goals

The question relating to medium- to long-term goals also yielded some surprising results (Table 27).

Table 27: WHAT SHOULD BE DONE IN THE MEDIUM TO LONG TERM ?

		Percentage endorsement			
N	1	2	3	4	Type of action
94	2.1	11.7	**21,3**	**64,9**	Gun and other weapons control
95	0.0	6.3	**30,5**	**63,2**	National economic upliftment
94	0.0	4.3	**41,5**	**54,3**	Violence prevention education aimed at adults
94	1.1	12.8	**31,9**	**54,3**	National political reconciliation
94	1.1	8.5	**44,7**	**45,7**	Violence prevention education aimed at children
92	4.3	**27,2**	**27,2**	**41,3**	Curbs on media depictions of violence
91	3.3	**24,2**	**35,2**	**37,4**	Children's rights activism

Note: 1 = Not important 2 = Important 3 = Very important 4 = Top priority
All frequencies over 20% in bold

Some of the additional short-, medium- and long-term priorities suggested by organisations include:

Encourage perpetrators to get help.

Rather than refer children to institutions, families should be helped.

Children need environmental stimulation more than psychological counselling.

A co-ordinating mechanism to reach all children through existing resources should be created.

Family planning and reduction of unwanted births should be encouraged.

Empower children to expose child abuse.

Offer training in recognising children who have suffered trauma.

Educate teachers/community workers/police/church workers.

Media reports of violence should be balanced with reports of community success.

Children need to see their rights balanced against their duties.

Factors preventing organisations from functioning more effectively

The factors perceived by organisations to be preventing them from providing a more effective service are detailed in Table 28.

Many would welcome assistance not only in terms of funds but especially in terms of staff development, co-ordination of services provided by different organisations, and guidance on the most effective intervention strategies.

Proposed structures

The final question in the survey asked respondents for their suggestions about specific structures which could be established to achieve the goals outlined in previous questions.

National and regional co-ordination

The importance of a national plan for dealing with the problem of violence against children was repeatedly emphasised. Such a body would not necessarily be a direct service provider, but would provide

Table 28: FACTORS PREVENTING ORGANISATIONS FROM FUNCTIONING MORE EFFECTIVELY

	Percentage endorsement			
N	**1**	**2**	**3**	**Limiting factor**
79	7,6	21,5	**70,9**	The absence of a national plan for dealing with the problem
78	10,3	20,5	**69,2**	Lack of funds
78	9,0	25,6	**65,4**	Too few staff
76	13,2	34,2	**52,6**	Lack of suitably qualified staff
70	31,4	21,4	**47,1**	An overwhelming demand for our services
73	12,3	41,1	**46,6**	Our tendency to treat the symptoms rather than the causes
73	20,5	**39,7**	**39,7**	Lack of regional co-ordination
69	34,8	**37,7**	27,5	Own uncertainty regarding how best to address the problem
67	38,8	**35,8**	25,4	Isolation from other organisations
64	**59,4**	15,6	25,0	Dangerous working conditions
68	**41,2**	39,7	19,1	Lack of understanding of our services
64	**68,8**	23,4	7,8	Lack of trust in our credentials

Note: 1 = Not important 2 = Important 3 = Very important.
Highest row percentage frequencies in bold.

assistance in the utilisation of existing structures more effectively. According to respondents, this body would be responsible for:

i. framing a broad national programme of action;

ii. encouraging the formation of new local structures where needed;

iii. promoting networking between already existing and new organisations, thus improving referrals, avoiding duplication, and co-ordinating services and resources;

iv. linking NGOs with state structures;

v. facilitating training and research; and

vi. lobbying the government and the business sector for funds which can be used to subsidise services.

Community Peace Centres

Some 40 respondents had suggestions regarding structures to be established within communities, which could be termed Community Peace Centres. The following types of functional centres could be established:

> Trauma counselling centres; safe houses; emergency shelters; child help lines; places of safety; support groups; recreation centres; intermediate care centres; multipurpose centres; information and assistance centres; crisis centres; projects based on the Boys' Town model; play therapy centres; child guidance clinics; family counselling centres; advisory bureaus.

Time and again, it was stressed that these services be accessible and not only located in the cities.

Training trauma workers

Several respondents emphasised that community-based services should be of a high professional quality. This raised the question of training - a topic mentioned by nearly half the respondents. According to respondents, training is needed in:

> assisting child victims of violence; trauma counselling; identification of child victims of violence; general counselling skills; referral skills; recognising trauma symptoms; social work skills; peace education; what to do when violence occurs; how to respond to emergencies

Peace Education

Many respondents suggested that Peace Education should be part of the regular school curriculum and should include: training in conflict management skills, life skills, children's rights, coping skills, violence awareness, and other sources of assistance.

Child-friendly policing

Twenty-seven respondents mentioned the need for improved policing. It was suggested that the SAPS Child Protection Units should be expanded and that this should lead to the training of more qualified female staff. It was also felt that general police officials should be trained to be more responsive to the needs of children who have been exposed to violence and that they should become more conversant with children's rights.

Several respondents questioned aspects of the criminal justice system itself within which police have to operate. Emphasis was placed on ensuring appropriate penalties for abusers and greater protection of children in the judicial process.

SHORTCOMINGS OF THE SURVEY

One of the primary aims of the survey was to establish the nature and extent of the need for services to children affected by violence. Although useful information could be gleaned from organisations already active in the field, their diverse nature and the uneven quality of data they were able to provide make it very difficult to draw definite conclusions regarding the scope of the problem of violence against children.

It proved impossible to formulate a precise definition of violence and, more importantly, of public violence. The definition described could be read as covering virtually anything, from children traumatised and displaced by Khumalo Street-style gun battles to working-class children suffering from respiratory infections and diarrhoea (both surely the product of "political factors"). The consequence is that respondents used their own common-sense definitions, which differed from person to person.

Suggestions for future research

i. Focused epidemiological surveys of particular, narrowly defined violent actions, such as child sex abuse, and their impact on children. This would involve careful sampling strategies and the collection of data by trained survey staff using structured interviews. Depending on the phenomenon being investigated, data could be collected on a door-to-door basis or at centres such as clinics, schools, hospitals and police stations (not at a variety of service organisations such as in the present survey). It is important that these kinds of surveys should not concentrate exclusively on children, or on psychological symptomatology, but should also focus on adult perpetrators and victims and on the physical and other harm suffered by children.

ii. Ongoing, more general data collection by service organisations such as those participating in the present survey — all using a standard format and reporting to a central co-ordinating body. The data format and reporting mechanism should, however, be very carefully devised, ensuring that the most important kinds of data are included.

CHAPTER 6

■

INQUIRY RECOMMENDATIONS

Norman Duncan & Brian Rock

In a country faced with as many problems as South Africa currently is, merely describing social problems constitutes a pointless, if not demoralising, exercise when unaccompanied by attempts to offer solutions. In this chapter, an attempt is made to produce an outline of a plan to address the problems faced by South African children as a result of public violence.

REACTIVE STRATEGIES

Immediate survival needs

One of the more visible consequences of the high levels of public violence in this country is that it left, and continues to leave, countless children without food, shelter, clothing and medical care. Indeed, the overall success of working with children may be largely determined by whether these needs are timeously and adequately attended to.

A number of studies stress the importance of increasing the number, as well as improving the conditions, of institutions providing shelter and care for children (Simpson, 1993; Smith & Holford, 1993; Straker & Moosa, 1992). One legacy of apartheid is that few adequately equipped and suitably staffed shelters exist for children left destitute as a result of political violence. Despite being managed and staffed by dedicated people, these institutions are frequently just what their name implies: physical shelters, which cannot meet the essential higher order needs of the individual. It is vital, therefore, that such facilities be upgraded to provide not only the bare essentials but adequate stimulation and emotional support.

Psychological rehabilitation

The provision of accessible psychological rehabilitation programmes to assist children and adolescents who have been exposed to violence is also of crucial importance.

The specific suggestions in regard to psychological services which emerged from the inquiry include:

i. Emergency individual counselling and psychotherapy to children affected by political violence.

ii. Support groups for children affected by public violence as well as their parents and other caregivers.

iii. The establishment of child help lines.

iv. The establishment of mobile counselling units.

v. Support groups for people providing services to child victims of public violence.

vi. Peer group counselling. This form of intervention would be particularly valuable in cases where young people have been exposed to incidents of political violence in which adults were the main protagonists. As Straker & Moosa (1992) observe, it becomes very difficult for adult counsellors to effectively assist these children because adults in such situations are frequently perceived as "persecutory".

Most researchers, however, stress that a psychological intervention programme can be of maximum benefit to children affected by public violence only if the following points are borne in mind when these programmes are developed and implemented:

i. Interventions should be developed and implemented in such a manner that they do not "medicalise" or pathologise children's reactions to public violence; for as Netshiombo (1993) observes, this could lead not only to the further disempowerment of child victims of violence but also to the creation of "new" justifications for "old" forms of oppression (cf. Swartz & Levett, 1989).

ii. Indigenous practices and values should be taken into account when intervention strategies are developed (Mkhize, 1993; O'Brien, 1993).

iii. To avoid the duplication of services, intervention strategies should as far as possible be implemented by agencies already working with children (DNHPD, 1993).

iv. Community involvement is crucial to the success of whatever interventions are finally decided upon (O'Brien, 1993; Bundy, 1992; Majodina, 1989).

v. Interventions should be age-appropriate (Straker & Moosa, 1992).

vi. Intervention programmes should not merely focus on helping children with their immediate problems or crises, but should also aim at allowing them to use these problems and crises as a means to positive growth (Majodina, 1989).

Service providers

Research undertaken by Simpson (1993) reveals an acute shortage of adequately trained care workers to assist the ever-mounting number of South African children affected by public violence (cf. Smith & Holford, 1993). This problem is further exacerbated by the degree to which services are fragmented, and by their subsequent isolation from one another.

It is evident that there will never be enough professional personnel — even if this were desirable — to meet the breadth and depth of children's needs. Beyond the existing shortage of professional health care workers, the training of lay health care workers has three important advantages:

i. Unlike many professional health care workers, people within communities are familiar with local conditions and concerns. Individuals are often best helped by those who understand and share their life experiences (Majodina, 1989).

ii. The involvement of local people can greatly enhance people's sense of control over their lives and environment (Dawes, 1992).

iii. The involvement of lay care workers can lead to the multiplication of people available to assist with community development, as well as setting in motion a process whereby an ever-increasing number of people within communities are equipped with the basic skills to assist traumatised individuals (Dawes, 1992).

Several studies submitted to the Inquiry stressed the importance of training lay health care workers not only to identify and assist people traumatised by public violence, but also to recognise when they are not equipped to deal with certain cases and to refer these to appropriate agencies and professionals (Frankel, 1993; Ramokgopa, 1993). Individuals identified as being most likely to benefit from training as lay health care workers, and particularly as lay counsellors, include teachers, police, clergy, community workers and social workers based within violence-prone communities. In view of the amount of time parents and teachers spend with children, Frankel (1993) and Ramokgopa (1993) suggest that their training — at least identifying the problems children can experience as a result of political violence — should enjoy priority.

In addition to training lay health care workers and the public at large, there is also an undeniable need to provide adequate training for health care professionals to deal with traumatised children (Netshiombo, 1993; Hirshowitz et al., 1992). The training normally given to health care workers in South Africa does not equip them to assist victims of public violence effectively. According to Netshiombo (1993) mental health workers are often

> ... trained in "treatment" of "disturbed" and "problematic" individuals, [and] ... are not equipped to deal with the large numbers of persons requiring diverse forms of help who present ... themselves in the wake of the civil strife (p. 5).

Community reconstruction and development

Community involvement is seen as central to work with children affected by violence, mainly because as Hirshowitz et al. (1992) observe, it underlines the very important notion that violence is a problem of communities and the country at large.

Communities frequently suffer the destruction of schools, health care facilities, homes and churches. Thus, it is essential that where these structures are destroyed or compromised, their reconstruction be treated as a priority (NCRC, 1994). Indeed, this reconstruction is an important prerequisite for lasting peace, as violence is less likely to occur or recur in well-developed and smooth-functioning communities (SANCCFW, 1993).

Financing of violence intervention projects

While acknowledging the importance of empowering communities to address the problems with which they are confronted, most of the submissions that make reference to the funding of violence intervention projects argue that, in view of the current high levels of unemployment, poverty and public violence, it is becoming increasingly difficult to generate funds from within communities for implementing violence intervention strategies (DNHPD, 1993; IISA, 1993). Consequently, the state, by virtue of its function as the "ultimate guardian" of children (Straker & Moosa, 1992), should take responsibility for funding whatever programmes are required to ensure that appropriate mechanisms are established (DNHPD, 1993; IISA, 1993; Robertson, 1990).

PROACTIVE STRATEGIES

Before discussing primary prevention, it is important to mention that certain children at risk may need to be identified. One group in particular are those who have participated in the "struggle". It is emphasised that these young people's reintegration into broader society should be dealt with as a matter of urgency. Moreover, appropriate processes are required to acknowledge their particular experiences and sacrifices (Straker & Moosa, 1994; O'Brien, 1993). Most importantly, these processes have to be linked to the demarcation of new social roles for young militants or combatants if their reintegration into broader society is to be successful. Both Straker & Moosa (1994) and O'Brien (1993) provide broad outlines of strategies.

Mass educational campaigns

The function of mass educational campaigns would be twofold. First, that the public be informed about the deleterious effects of public violence on children; and second, that all forms of violence be "de-legitimated".

Schools are an important and accessible site for the development and implementation of programmes aimed at teaching children tolerance (Dawes & Finchelescu, 1993; Dawes, 1992; Simpson, 1991) and non-violent life styles (SANCCFW, 1993). More specifically, it is recommended that programmes be developed to educate children in non-violent problem-solving and conflict management, as well as the balancing of their rights and responsibilities (Frankel, 1993; Madela & Poggenpoel, 1993; Klaasen, 1990).

The family and parents or caretakers, in particular, occupy an important place in the lives of children. If this position is to be harnessed positively, parenting skills programmes will require development and thoughtful implementation. The development of programmes to empower parents is particularly important in view of the fact that, due to factors such as poverty and apartheid practices, the majority of parents in South Africa have been disempowered to such an extent that they "have lost faith in their own parental capacities" (SANCCFW, 1993, p. 2). If they are to be effective, these programmes should also focus on reducing the high levels of intra-family violence in the country (Botha & Van Vuuren, 1993; Mkhize, 1993; Klaasen, 1990).

Mass employment creation for youth

Various researchers stress the importance of mass job creation as a means of developing lasting peace (Woods, 1989; Allwood, 1986). This recommendation is based on the assumption that unemployed young people are more likely to resort to violence as a means of asserting themselves and giving vent to their frustrations.

These primary prevention strategies underscore the need for fundamental social, political and economic change, if public violence is to be greatly reduced. Factors such as poverty, social exclusion and oppression provide fertile ground for public violence. As Zaaiman (1994) notes, the only way to ensure that public violence is significantly reduced is by setting in place just and fully democratic structures that ensure free and equal access to social, political and economic opportunities (cf. Allwood, 1986). Over and above social, political and economic change, Fourie (1990) argues that there is a pressing urgency for the immediate adoption of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

RESEARCH NEEDED

There is general consensus that the intervention strategies discussed in the preceding sections have to be accompanied by ongoing research programmes; for it is only through thorough research that (i) the need for violence intervention programmes on a national scale can most convincingly be illustrated, and (ii) the effectiveness of the various intervention strategies employed can be assessed (Simpson, 1993). The following suggestions include some of the specific areas or topics identified as warranting urgent research:

i. Legislation protecting children: Existing legislation protecting children against violence is not adequate. Research in this area is required as a matter of urgency.

ii. Research on children rendered homeless as a result of violence: This relates to the needs of homeless children and ways to ensure their integration into supportive social units.

iii. Ascertaining the full impact of public violence on children.

iv. Ascertaining the adequacy of services aimed at assisting children affected by public violence.

v. Identifying and examining the factors which influence the resilience of children and adolescents in dealing with the stress of direct exposure to public violence.

vi. Examining the manner in which different socio-economic and political contexts influence the impact of direct exposure to public violence on the moral development of children.

vii. Examining the relationship between anti-social behaviour and public violence.

viii. Examining the strategies utilised by children to cope with political violence and whether the nature and effectiveness of these strategies are influenced by cultural factors and the length of exposure to violence.

ix. Examining the influence of television on aggressive behaviour and, ultimately, public violence.

x. Ascertaining the extent of domestic and criminal violence and their impact on South African children.

Various researchers and organisations have also stressed the need to:

i. Co-ordinate research studies dealing with the effects of violence on children: Not only would co-ordination of research allow for more methodological consistency across studies, but it could also reduce unnecessary duplication of research.

ii. Ensure that research findings are accessible to communities: Research findings should be presented in a comprehensible manner with the target audience in mind in terms of language and the use of statistics and technical jargon.

iii. Conduct participatory research projects in communities: This form of research has potential not only to empower but also to facilitate the development of intervention projects that are suited to the specific needs and character of different communities.

PROPOSED PLAN: NATIONAL INTERVENTIONS PROGRAMME

This section attempts to synthesise some of the more important recommendations contained in the previous section and to sketch a broad outline for a possible national plan aimed at addressing the needs of children affected by public violence.

Development of a national violence monitoring and intervention system

It is proposed that monitoring and intervention take place at the following levels (these functions could be performed by a "National Co-ordinating Committee" of sorts):

Monitoring the direct effects of violence on South African children

In order to address the widely acknowledged paucity of information (particularly quantitative information) regarding public violence and its effects on South African children, urgent attention should be given to the development of a centralised data-capturing programme aimed at monitoring the effects of all forms of violence on children aged 18 years and younger.

The categories of information which this programme should provide could include the following:

i. Identifying data: This could include name, age, gender and socio-cultural background.

ii. Information regarding the effects of violence on the victims: e.g. Did a particular incident of violence lead to the displacement, physical traumatisation and/or psychological traumatisation of the victims?

iii. Information on the perpetrators: e.g. What is the name, age, gender, previous offences and occupation of the perpetrators?

iv. Information on the location of the crime: e.g. Did the crime occur at home, at school or in the street?

v. Information regarding the time of the crime: e.g. What was the time of day, week, month when the crime occurred?

vi. Information regarding the response of the relevant authorities: e.g. What action was taken or not taken by the SAP and social workers when an incident of violence involving children was brought to their attention?

This information should be managed by an independent "non-service" organisation or structure which has the requisite skills and infrastructure to deal with the type of information. This structure should ideally also have the facilities and the skills to train NGOs and other organisations in the collection and management of this type of information. Furthermore, this structure should be responsible for issuing regular reports (of a qualitative as well as quantitative nature) on violent crimes committed against children in South Africa. In order to achieve its objectives, this structure should build and develop strong links with other agencies monitoring abuses against children.

The appointment of an ombudsman for South African children can provide another important source of data in regard to violent crimes committed against children.

Monitoring and co-ordinating of the services offered by agencies working with children

Any initiative aimed at addressing the needs of children affected by violence should include a programme which attempts to identify, monitor, evaluate and co-ordinate the various services available. This would enhance service provision and ensure that money and other resources are not wasted as a result of *unnecessary* duplication.

Ideally, this would be co-ordinated by an interdisciplinary body which is sufficiently representative of the types of organisations offering aid to children.

Monitoring and co-ordinating research regarding the effects of violence on children

This programme would entail the co-ordination of research efforts and the establishment of a comprehensive computerised database reflecting already existing research in this area, both locally and internationally.

CONCLUSION

It is true that the elimination of violence and its deleterious effects on children will largely be determined by the political, social and economic advances which this country will be able to make over the next few years. However, the long years of exposure to apartheid as well as infra-family and intra-community political violence have so distorted the psyche of South Africans that political, social and economic transformation alone will not suffice to put an end to the current high levels of violence (all forms) and South Africa's ignominious status as the world's most violent country (Bundy, 1992). What will also be required is to start a national anti-violence initiative of sorts aimed at making South Africans less prone to supporting violent practices, groups and institutions, and more respectful of human life.

CHAPTER 7

■

ADVISORY PANEL RECOMMENDATIONS

INTRODUCTION

As the Goldstone Commission inquiry report acknowledges, South Africa is one of the most violent societies in the world. The inquiry report sets out in some detail what is known of the various kinds of violence suffered by South African children, in the past and today. Coming to terms with the violence requires South Africa to recognise and work through, rather than forget, the violence of the past, with a view to working towards a non-violent society.

The Advisory Panel reflects the view of the inquiry that it is not helpful to children to focus narrowly on particular forms of violence – "political" violence, "public" violence, "domestic" violence or child abuse. There are clear links between the various forms of violence and their antecedents which make a focus on any one unhelpful. But the distinctions are of course important when it comes to planning particular interventions. The inquiry report also illustrates that the reasons for violence are highly complex, with many factors interrelating. Children's reactions to violence are also a result of a complex set of interacting factors. The panel agrees that there is no simple relationship between exposure to violence and serious psychological effects of violence.

The levels of violence in South African society have desensitised adults and children to violence and have normalised violent behaviour, the possession and use of weapons, etc. We emphasise the need for clear and unequivocal denunciation of all forms of violence involving children by everyone, including in particular political leaders, public servants, and community and youth leaders at all levels.

Why do we focus on children and violence when this problem affects all in South Africa? First we believe that all communities recognise the importance of childhood and the community's particular obligation to protect children. We believe that children, because of their size and vulnerability, have suffered disproportionately from the effects of violence. We acknowledge that violence by children and young people is a big, possibly growing, problem. But violence is a learned response: while individuals must be considered responsible for individual acts of violence, adults cannot blame children for developing violent behaviour. There is ample research to show that early intervention is vital to prevent the development of violent attitudes and actions; that what happens in the early years and in particular within the family and in schools is most influential in determining attitudes to violence. Interventions to reduce and prevent violence involving children will be of benefit to the whole community. While some of our proposals demand additional resources, they will undoubtedly be cost-effective in the longer term: violence involving children is highly expensive in financial as well as human terms.

It is most important that in describing and focusing on child victims of violence and in painting a picture of a very violent society, we also emphasise the incredible resilience of so many South African children, families and communities deeply affected by the pervasive violence of apartheid. Effective interventions have been and should be built on existing strengths in the community. Children must be seen as people, as active participants with views and feelings of their own, not simply as objects of concern.

Interventions at many levels are needed to prevent violence involving children and to ensure early detection, management and rehabilitation of child victims of violence. The inquiry report indicates that much valuable work is being done already, in particular at community level, much of it unacknowledged and unrewarded. We must build on what already exists.

As we go on to propose various levels of intervention, we echo the inquiry report in emphasising that efforts to reduce violence will only be successful if accompanied by continuing socio-political transformation and economic reform, challenging persisting inequalities and discrimination. The inquiry report has indicated that the most profound levels of violence involving children were exacerbated by extreme economic inequality and racism.

In view of the process of reconciliation in South Africa and efforts to unite all its people, it is vital that party political interests should not hinder the development of effective interventions, which should in all cases be accessible regardless of the political persuasion, race, religion etc. of children or their parents.

Our report incorporates and builds on recommendations made by organisations and individuals who responded to the Goldstone inquiry, and was also influenced by the views of children expressed in the South African Children's Charter, adopted in June 1992.

AIMS

The aims of this report are to

- promote the rights of all children in South Africa to physical and personal integrity, to protection from all forms of physical, mental and emotional violence. Children must feel safe from violence everywhere - in their homes, their schools and their communities. The new South Africa must be a child-friendly society;

- sensitise everyone in South Africa to the effects of all kinds of violence on children;
- empower and support families and communities; and
- prevent violence involving children, and to rehabilitate child victims of violence.

PRINCIPLES

The Children's Charter of South Africa, drawn up and adopted at the Children's Summit in 1992, states:

Article 5

1. All children have the right to be protected from all types of violence including: physical, emotional, verbal, psychological, sexual, state, political, gang, domestic, school, township and community, street, racial, self-destructive and all other forms of violence.
2. All children have the right to freedom from corporal punishment at school, from the police and in prisons, and at home.
3. All children have the right to be protected from neglect and abandonment.
4. All children have the right to be protected from township and political violence and to have "safe places" and to have community centres where they can go for help and safety from violence.

5. All children have the right to be educated about child abuse and the right to form youth groups to protect them from abuse.
6. All persons have the duty to report all violence against, abuse of and neglect of any child to the appropriate authorities.
7. Children should not be used as shields or tools by the perpetrators of violence.
8. Children have the right to say no to violence.

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child provides a set of detailed principles and standards for the treatment of children. It has now been ratified (fully accepted) by more than 160 countries worldwide.

We commend the relevant principles of the convention to all those involved in challenging violence involving children.

The preamble of the convention emphasises children's right to "special care and assistance". The following articles are particularly relevant to challenging violence involving children: Article 2 insists that the rights in the convention must be available to ALL children without discrimination of any kind. Article 3 insists that in all actions concerning children "the best interests of the child must be a primary consideration". A third key principle expressed in Article 12 is that children have a right to express their views freely and have them taken seriously in all matters affecting them, and to be heard in any judicial or administrative proceedings: consultation, active participation and responsibility will empower children as active agents against violence.

It is Article 19 which sets out all children's right to protection from "all forms of physical or mental violence":

> States Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child...

Other articles are relevant to gross breaches of the child's right to physical and personal integrity: the right to life and maximum development (Article 6); the involvement of children in armed conflict (Article 38), and sexual and other exploitation of children and abduction (Articles 34, 35 and 36).

The convention defines family to include "parents, or where applicable, the members of the extended family or community as provided for by local custom, legal guardians or other persons legally responsible for the child" (Article 5). It also upholds children's right not to be separated against their will from their parents, extended family or community, except where competent bodies subject to judicial review decide it is in the child's best interests (Article 9).

Principles with regard to interventions

- As far as possible, ways should be developed to equip communities with skills in order to assist child victims of violence, and to prevent violence to children and by children.
- Services should be promoted which are culturally appropriate and cost-effective, and which empower local communities and draw on community expertise.
- It is essential to ensure that existing public services contribute fully to prevention of violence involving children and to work with child victims of violence.

- Preventive, educative, management and rehabilitative components should be blended at all levels of intervention.
- The integration of services should be promoted at all levels of intervention.
- The effectiveness of interventions should be evaluated and the results used to improve overall responses to violence involving children.
- Specific attention should be given to the position of girl children in society, and to challenging stereotypes which promote male violence.
- The active participation of affected children should be encouraged whenever possible and appropriate; they should be consulted and involved in decision-making, and their views taken seriously.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Denunciation of all violence involving children

The Advisory Panel emphasises the need for clear and unequivocal denunciation of all forms of violence involving children in the words and actions of political leaders, public servants, community and youth leaders and other individuals at all levels.

Children's rights

The UN convention

The convention places the government under a duty to report within two years to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child on progress towards full implementation.

The government should ensure that the process of preparing its report is one which actively involves all communities, including children themselves, in assessing how existing law, policy and practice meet the standards of the convention, and setting out what needs to be done for full implementation.

The convention's principles and standards should be used as a framework by all those involved in work to reduce and prevent violence involving South African children - by state, provincial and local government, NGOs and other groups.

Once ratified, the convention also places the government under a duty to make the convention widely known to children and adults.

The state government should ensure adequate dissemination of the convention in appropriate forms and languages for all communities.

Children's rights commissioners

A statutory independent office of Children's Rights Commissioner should be established to promote the rights and interests of South African children, who have no vote and no say in the political process; similar and linked commissioners should be appointed in the provinces. A feasibility study reviewing similar developments in other countries (e.g. the Norwegian children's ombudsperson, Australian Children's Interests Bureau, New Zealand Commissioner for Children) and proposing a model appropriate to South Africa should be commissioned. The role of commissioners would encompass but go far wider than the problems of violence involving children. The major role would be to encourage effective implementation of the UN convention. The commissioners would need to be independent of government, and to have legal powers of investigation. Relevant government departments should be required to consult and pay due consideration to the commissioners' views on policy development for children.

A national co-ordinating body on violence and children

The inquiry report reflected a strong view from organisations that there is a need for one or more co-ordinating bodies and proposed a National Co-ordinating Committee consisting of individuals from major organisations and institutions and relevant government departments. It is quite clear that the needs of children affected by violence far outstrip the current availability of services. The purpose of such a central body or bodies is not to control work at community and grassroots level but to enable and support, seeking to ensure that there is communication between projects, cross-pollination of ideas, and the most effective use of available resources.

The Advisory Panel echoes the inquiry report's recommendation and hopes that the foundation for a National Co-ordinating Committee on Children and Violence can be laid.

The emphasis of the committee's functions and work must be on devolving responsibility and on empowering and supporting local projects and communities. It must not replicate or duplicate the work of any existing body. We provisionally propose the following functions, drawing on and adding to the inquiry report's ideas:

a. identifying the needs of children, and as a priority the urgent needs of particular groups of children, or of children in particular regions: children at immediate risk of serious violence, children suffering extreme trauma, displaced children and children separated from families and communities, including those from outside South Africa;

b. identifying people, trained or untrained, formally or informally employed who are already contributing to violence prevention or working with child victims of violence;

c. co-ordinating/encouraging the development of a human resources development programme to build on existing skills and commitment at community level;

d. reviewing and co-ordinating interventions with those involved, seeking to ensure the most effective use of resources;

e. fund-raising for organisations working with children affected by violence; monitoring and co-ordinating research on violence involving children, and in particular evaluations of programmes and interventions; developing with appropriate organisations and affected communities an agreed code of ethics for researchers on violence involving children.

The National Co-ordinating Committee should be substantially funded by state government.

Legal reform

Ending "legal" violence to children

In seeking to reduce and prevent violence involving children, it is essential that all forms of violence to children should be challenged. At present various forms are both legally and to varying degrees socially approved.

Corporal punishment

We recognise that the issue of corporal punishment of children, in the home, schools and penal and other institutions, remains controversial in South Africa. But we cannot accept that children, smaller and more vulnerable than the rest of us, should have less legal protection from being hit and humiliated than adults. In the parallel campaign to protect women from violence, no-one advocates that some arbitrary level of violence to women should be tolerated in the law. Children deserve at least equal protection. The inquiry report and other studies indicate the extremely high levels of corporal punishment and other degrading treatment of South African children in their homes, schools and penal and other institutions. The UN convention states that children must be protected from "all forms of physical or mental violence".

We emphasise that the purpose of legal reform against physical punishment is not to increase prosecution of parents or other carers, or state intervention in families; the purpose (and the measured effect where such reforms are already in place in other countries) is to change attitudes and practice, to make it clear that it is no more acceptable to hit a child than to hit anyone else. We see legal reform as an essential basis for education and for child protection. We recognise that there is a need for parent skills training and teacher training to encourage constructive approaches to discipline which promote the growth of self-discipline. Many parents live in conditions of extreme stress, and many teachers have to work with few resources and over-large classes: these conditions must be challenged and improved urgently, but they do not in any sense justify violence to children.

We recommend that legal reforms should ensure that all physical punishment of children is unlawful. Without delay there should be a review within appropriate government departments of legislation on corporal punishment of children in the home, in all categories of day care and child care institutions, in foster care, in all categories of schools, and in the penal system (both as a sentence of courts and a punishment within penal institutions).

Sexual abuse

We recommend that legislation on sexual abuse of children should be reviewed to ensure that it is not discriminatory and that it is in compliance with the UN convention.

Vetting those who work with children

The panel recommends that urgent consideration should be given to developing structures, policies and practices which seek to ensure that people deemed likely to abuse children do not gain unsupervised access to them, through employment or otherwise. These could include a national register of convicted perpetrators of abuse (with due regard for rehabilitation and civil liberties). There is also a need for codes of practice for employment and supervision of those who will have substantial access to children.

Juvenile justice, child care and child protection law

The juvenile justice system should focus on rehabilitation, not retribution and punishment.

We recommend that the Department of Justice and Welfare should examine, as a matter of urgency, the current provisions of the Child Care Act of 1983, the Criminal Procedure Act, the provisions of African customary law and all other relevant statutes in order to ensure that there is no contradiction between these provisions and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. These statutes should also be sensitive in their provisions to the variation in South African cultural positions. This will facilitate their acceptance at community level. All local authorities should ensure that the laws and rights applying to children are applied.

In reviewing and reforming legislation on juvenile justice, child care and child protection in the light of principles in the UN convention and other instruments, there should be an emphasis on seeking to empower families and communities to find effective solutions that reduce separation and institutionalisation of children. Punitive interventions including the use of custody are ineffective in challenging violence and crime.

"Informal" justice involving children

The Advisory Panel believes that "informal" systems of punishing children — or using children to punish others — for offences at community level breach the UN convention and should no longer be permitted.

Monitoring all forms of violence

The panel believes that responsibility for monitoring and recording all forms of violence to children lies at all levels from government to community. At state government level, for example, regulations should require all those institutions in which children are detained (police, penal, education, social services, health, etc.) to record and report on all restrictions of the liberty of children to the state government, which should keep and publish annual statistics.

Schools and other institutions involving children should be required to record and report on incidents of violence involving children (standard definitions and reporting forms should be developed and agreed among all relevant departments).

At community level, children need a safe place to report abuse: there should be identified, appropriately trained people at community level to whom children can report abuse. Children also need people they can talk to in confidence about abuse and related concerns. An ethical code should be developed. Incidents of reported abuse at community level should be recorded and reported centrally to help to build up a national picture of violence to children.

Standards for all institutions and carers of children and inspection of institutions

Any existing state regulations covering standards of care for institutions which include children should be reviewed in the light of the convention's principles to ensure effective prevention of all forms of violence. All institutions for children and non-institutional settings including foster care and day care should be covered by consistent regulations.

All institutions should be subject to inspection by bodies including lay community representatives and, where appropriate, young people. Inspection reports should be published. Guidelines for inspection should ensure that violence prevention is a high priority, and that inspectors provide an opportunity for children and staff to talk to them in private.

There should be proper regulations and inspection procedures for any transport systems – e.g. school transport – for children, to ensure safety and minimise accidents.

The media

We recommend that appropriate bodies representative of the various media interests – TV, radio, films and video, print media, etc. – should place prevention of violence involving children high on their agenda and consider how they can maximise a positive contribution to violence prevention. There should be appropriate representation of media interests on the National Co-ordinating Committee proposed above. We are not advocating censorship but responsibility.

PRACTICAL INTERVENTIONS

Training and intervention

Integration of intervention initiatives

We note that South Africa has a poor history of service co-ordination for children affected by violence. We also note the important role played by a number of organisations and individuals in addressing the problems of children affected by violence.

It is essential that steps be taken at community, regional and national level to promote service co-ordination.

Access to services

We note that access to services is unevenly distributed both between and within regions. Some aspects of service will differ according to the needs of a particular region as assessed by the community concerned.

In order to improve access to child mental health services, we recommend that primary health care settings and/or, where appropriate, schools should be used as bases for the provision of services offered by local and regional governments.

We are aware that people who are suffering the after-effects of traumatic experiences frequently do not seek help because they are afraid of the stigma attached to mental disorder. We recommend that the stigma associated with mental disorder should be combated through community education at local level. We recommend that victims of violence be afforded free, confidential and supportive participation in therapeutic and educational programmes. We also strongly recommend the parents, teachers and political, community and religious leaders be informed of these facts. They should also be requested to facilitate access to mental health services.

Types of service

We note the need for a variety of educative, therapeutic and rehabilitative initiatives in order to address problems arising from the exposure of children to violence. We note that the majority of children affected by violence are from poor communities which speak African languages. They may also not employ the same approaches to the resolution of psychological problems as those in which the majority of mental health workers are trained.

We recommend that whatever the treatment approach adopted, care should be taken to assess the appropriateness, and wherever possible the likely effectiveness, of the intervention programmes before adoption.

We also recommend that all interventions are sensitive to the specific language and cultural situation of the child.

We recommend that, as far as possible, interventions should involve the child's family and should involve a follow-up beyond the initial contact.

We also recommend that services should involve preventive, therapeutic and rehabilitative elements, although not necessarily contained in the same intervention programme.

These recommendations should be conveyed to project staff and training institutions.

Preventive services

Preventive services involve educational interventions with adults and children as well as structural interventions such as community reconstruction.

We recommend that educational programmes be established which are directed at both adults and children. These would aim to promote awareness of the nature of violence, its sources, and its consequences for individual children of different ages, families and communities.

We recommend the establishment of educational programmes to promote awareness of methods whereby children and their parents may be assisted to cope with the immediate consequences of violence. Particular personnel who should be targeted here are health workers, teachers and members of the police service and defence force.

We note that children, especially in informal settlements, are forced to spend their days without adult care. Under such circumstances, children can be drawn into criminal and violent activities. It is also the case that sports activities may play a significant role in the building of a positive sense of identity among adolescents and youth.

We therefore recommend that urgent attention be given to the provision of age-appropriate recreational and sports facilities by local authorities. Community members should be trained as part of the RDP to supervise children in these facilities.

Immediate interventions following violence

We note that children may be negatively affected by being victims of violence themselves, by witnessing violence towards those close to them and by participating in violence. We also note that parents, teachers and others in the child's immediate environment can do much to prevent the occurrence of more serious reactions to violence.

We recommend that in communities identified as being at high risk of violence, community members should be informed of the ways in which they can offer support and appropriate assistance to children following exposure to violence. This applies especially to those directly concerned with the care and welfare of children.

In order to facilitate early intervention following exposure to violence, we recommend that community members (e.g. teachers and religious workers) and NGOs be trained to identify signs of trauma and distress in children. They should also be trained to identify and refer those children in need of special assistance as a consequence of their exposure to violence.

We note the appalling neglect in the provision of child psychiatric services in South Africa, and in particular the lack of in-patient services for children severely affected by violence. The provision of such services at local level is essential for the proper care of seriously disturbed children. Without them, recommendations for referral are pointless.

We therefore recommend that local and regional health and welfare services co-ordinate the provision of mental health facilities of this type.

Training of personnel

We note that there are a number of approaches which may assist child victims of violence. These range from those developed by professional mental health workers to community-based initiatives. We also note that mainstream mental health interventions such as face-to-face counselling may frequently not be appropriate in all South African communities.

Many children affected by violence lack services provided in their own language which are sensitive to their cultural background. Communities affected by violence and poverty lack sufficient trained professional mental health and social service workers.

Therefore we recommend that the state should ensure that the numbers of persons trained in these fields is increased.

We also recommend that institutions involved in the training of mental health professionals should take appropriate steps to ensure the admission of students from disadvantaged communities.

We further recommend that mental health workers who are working in affected communities should be involved in the transfer of appropriate skills to members of these communities so as to strengthen their ability to assist themselves.

Survivors of violence can be encouraged to become community educators and change agents: for example in assistance with such activities as survivor support groups, documentation of survivor experiences by survivors themselves, and the production of written records of such experiences.

We recommend that initiatives such as these should only be undertaken after careful evaluation of the participants and under strict supportive supervision.

Particular populations in need

Children and youth who have participated in violence

Ways need to be found to assist young people who have been seriously affected by participation in violence. We note that many of the youth played an important role in the resistance against apartheid. In so doing they achieved recognition and a source of positive identity. In the present situation, they no longer have a role which is recognised by the community or the leaders. In fact they are frequently viewed purely as a criminal element without sensitivity to the conditions which produced their behaviour. This has led to resentment, despair and a lack of a constructive orientation to the future.

In this regard we recommend that ways be found to improve the self-esteem and positive identity of this group. This may be done in a variety of ways, and local communities and the youth themselves should be involved in planning of such initiatives.

Rather than simply condemning the behaviour of these young people, society at large and political organisations should be particularly sensitive to their needs, without in any way condoning their behaviour.

We recommend that the government take urgent steps to address the problems of this group. These might include the involvement of this group in community reconstruction initiatives which are linked to the provision of education and training opportunities. Examples include their participation in the rebuilding of houses, clinics and schools, and the development of agricultural co-operatives as part of skill training.

Displaced children and families

We note the large numbers of children who have been displaced by public violence. These children are frequently separated from parents and are prevented from returning to their homes.

We note also the importance of early psychological intervention in order to prevent future serious problems among refugee populations. We have also taken into consideration that after long separations from family members and communities, children may develop strong ties with other adults or peer groups.

We recommend that refugee workers be particularly sensitive to the enduring nature of such attachments which may affect children after they have been reunited with their communities.

We recommend that under refugee conditions, young children in particular should be reunited with family or community members as soon as possible.

We recommend that steps be taken to ensure that this is taken into account in the management programmes of refugee and disaster planners.

We recommend that local communities take responsibility for facilitating the return of children and their families to their homes as soon as possible following violence.

However, this will not be effective unless the government provides protection for those wishing to return to their homes, and we recommend that this be done.

Parents and caretakers of children

We note the crucial importance of providing support for those who are responsible for the care of children during times of violence. It has also been shown that parents and teachers who have to live and work in stressful social conditions become stressed. One result of this is that they may come to rely on punitive child-rearing and educative practices. We also note that factors like poverty and apartheid practices have made it difficult for parents to contribute to their children's optimal well-being and development. Teachers in the townships and rural areas have to cope with very large classes and few resources. This contributes to teacher stress and to punitive educational practices which we reject, as these practices are a major source of socialisation to violence.

We recommend that as part of the state and regional governments' educational initiatives, urgent attention be given to these structural sources of violence in the schools.

To facilitate better adult-child relations, we recommend programmes for enhancing parenting skills and parents' capacity to cope with hardships. Receiving training in basic applied child development as part of life skills courses in schools should also serve this purpose.

We recommend that school health services should be empowered so that they can better fulfil their task of helping affected children and teachers.

Children exposed to violence

Children express their fear and suffering as well as their strength and coping skills through a variety of overt and covert forms of communication. In identifying children's needs for help, we have to be especially sensitive to their experiences and their ways of expressing them.

We recommend that support and supervision services be provided for parents, teachers and other personnel who deal with victims of violence. This is particularly necessary in times when the community is exposed to high levels of violence.

Close supportive relationships are fundamental for children affected by violence. To serve this purpose we recommend that support groups for children be established at local level in conditions where their families are unable to provide appropriate support due to their exposure to stress.

The evidence is that sensitive handling of victims of violence is crucial in the early stages. If this does not occur, the effects of the initial violence will be exacerbated.

For this reason we recommend that members of the civil service and the police who have to deal with child victims of violence receive special training.

We recommend that where children are called as witnesses in court hearings concerning violence and abuse, it is essential that special provision be made by the courts to reduce the stress which accompanies the court process.

Improvement of service planning

Epidemiology of violence

We recommend that areas which have particularly high levels of violence be identified for special attention with regard to service provision.

Similarly we recommend that it be considered important to identify areas which are underserved in terms of facilities for dealing with child victims of violence. We note that conditions in urban, rural and peri-urban areas frequently differ. Intervention initiatives must take account of these variations.

Training and support services

We recognise the crucial importance of support and training for those involved in the care of children affected by violence. Frequently projects suffer from a lack of resources, and frequently a few people operate under very difficult circumstances without support. This can lead to high stress levels among staff and not infrequently to sub-optimal service delivery.

We therefore recommend the following:

a. There should be training in administrative and management skills for project staff. Institution building should also be an essential part of the training.

b. Project staff should be chosen according to their skills and experience. We have to bear in mind that working with traumatised children is demanding. To enhance workers' commitment and endurance, special care should be taken to develop staff resources and to introduce methods which can be transferred for use by lay community members.

c. It is essential to identify untapped resources in the community that would contribute to helping children to recover from their experiences.

d. Project databases which document all aspects of the programme should be established. In particular the population receiving the service, the nature of their problems and the nature of the interventions must be recorded.

e. Projects should exchange information regularly with other programmes and institutions, and collect examples of other successful interventions.

f. In order to encourage networking, annual national and regional conventions for the discussion of interventions with children affected by violence should be established. These should be funded by regional and national departments of health and welfare.

g. A national database on appropriate interventions with children affected by different forms of violence should be established. A National Co-ordinating Committee should explore appropriate institutions to carry out this function.

h. We note that working with people who have undergone traumatic experiences is extremely stressful. It is also essential that people who take care of other traumatised persons be given any opportunity to work through their own experiences of trauma and their reactions to trauma work. For this reason we also recommend that structures be created in order to support the caregivers. In the case of project staff, supervision and related support activities are essential.

Collaboration between community programmes and research institutes

Research on the effects of violence on children and the evaluation of interventions is most important. However, research staff are sometimes insensitive when doing research in communities affected by violence. They may also be insensitive in developing or extending interventions initially developed by community organisations without proper acknowledgement or consultation. This causes resentment and undermines the basic purpose of research of understanding and helping those who are suffering. We recognise the importance of extending effective interventions to as many people as possible regardless of who developed the project.

We recommend that when researchers, practitioners and organisations wish to plan, extend or evaluate rehabilitation programmes, they should do this in close collaboration with project staff and communities. All effective programmes developed at community level must be acknowledged by those who wish to extend them elsewhere.

We recommend that researchers and practitioners take special care to respect the sensitivity of victims of violence and affected communities. Researchers should be obliged to feed back the results of their studies to the projects.

We recommend that evaluation of programmes and research should be an integral part of all programme planning and development.

Training of public servants to promote non-violence

There is an urgent need to create a child-friendly public service.

In order to achieve this we recommend

a. that civil servants be trained to reflect this in all their work with children;

b. the initiation of a process that will result in all education departments and institutions which train mental health workers and other appropriate civil servants incorporating programmes in their curricula aimed at the preventing of violence;

c. the development of an intersectoral staff development programme that will equip public servants in appropriate sectors, with skills that will enable them to prevent violence and alleviate the distress of children affected by violence. This should be a joint venture between the government and community.

Concerning the educational institutions, we recommend that representatives from justice, education, health and welfare departments form a committee to develop a special curriculum for all schools and appropriate tertiary institutions. The aim would be to formulate modules that encourage non-violence. A philosophy of non-violence should permeate the curriculum wherever possible. The syllabi should cover both theoretical and practical learning experiences. The committee would be responsible for the planning, implementation and evaluation of all phases of the curriculum.

The module for non-violence in education could cover topics such as life skills, communication skills, interpersonal skills, conflict resolution and problem solving, as well as parenting skills for pupils and students. Furthermore, topics should cover issues such as the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. We also recommend that the curriculum at the tertiary level should include consideration of types of violence, an introductory programme on the early detection of the effects of violence, and the management of affected children in crisis circumstances. Teachers should be trained to recognise the effects of violence and stress on school performance.

SECTION 1

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SECTION 2

CHAPTER 8

ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF VIOLENCE ON CHILDREN

Peter Newell

In the new South Africa, still placed top of the world league for crimes of interpersonal violence, everyone must want a less violent society, a society in which adults and children can walk and play without fear. But if that is to be created, then the state and individuals have to acknowledge and act on what is known about the development of violent attitudes and actions. The new nation is emerging from a past characterised by massive organised state violence directed at the overwhelming majority of its citizens: the mental violence of discrimination, of deliberately humiliating laws, policies and practices, the physical violence of a repressive administration and forced segregation. The violence of apartheid is ended, but its legacy of a society with deep-rooted inequalities and endemic violence lives on.

In seeking to reduce and prevent interpersonal violence of every kind — bullying, wife and partner abuse, child abuse, rape, mugging and all violent crime — there has to be a particular focus on children. What is known about the roots of violence must systematically influence policies and attitudes to child-rearing and child care, to education and to the police and justice system. The myth of beating the devil out of children has finally to be rejected.

It is not just a matter of responding to the overwhelming evidence of the harmful effects of deliberately hurting and humiliating children, and to the common desire to make human societies less violent. This is not simply a debate about different ways of child-rearing, or different educational or penal theories. It is — more importantly — a matter of recognising that children as people have human rights too, and that the right to physical and personal integrity, to protection from all forms of interpersonal violence, is a fundamental human right. It is this perspective which provides the imperative for action, and this right for all children is now upheld in international law in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

At the moment, attitudes to violence, and in particular to violence involving children, remain deeply confused in South Africa, as they do in most other countries. Children model themselves on adults: adult society does not consistently denounce violence. Macho male images are promoted and admired — and violence is predominantly a male problem. Appetites for very violent films and videos appear to increase. Millions still enthusiastically follow sports in which deliberately injuring opponents is the central aim. Languages are full of phrases reflecting violent attitudes and actions. Politicians, religious leaders and other public figures still advocate violent punishments for children, despite the volumes of evidence that they will undoubtedly make the problem of violence worse. Physical punishment of children, in the home and in institutions, remains legally and largely socially acceptable, and again use of language gives away attitudes — "a good hiding" etc.

The new South Africa's current emergence from the tragedy of the past provides a unique opportunity to reassess its attitudes to children and to violence, and to build a new respect for children and consistent child-centred policies, which could be influential far beyond its borders. All legislation is under review. Already by summer 1995 there were very positive signs that this process is to be used to systematically challenge routine violence to children, as the Constitutional Court and ministers of the Government of National Unity announced their opposition to corporal punishment (see below).

Why is it that we regard children, smaller and more vulnerable to physical and psychological injury than adults, as fair targets for hitting and humiliation? For some, there is the persisting belief that children are born bad, and must have that badness beaten out of them. For many, there is the personal experience of being hit and humiliated as children, and in turn hitting and humiliating their own children. Such experiences are very personal and highly charged. We do not want to think badly of ourselves, or of our parents. All this gets in the way of compassionate and logical consideration of the dangers and the fundamental injustice of the habit. The need for a reappraisal, for a denunciation of all deliberate violence and humiliation directed at children, should be common sense. The clear lesson that a child learns from being beaten or smacked is that the person who hits them believes that using violence is a legitimate means of sorting out problems or conflicts. That the beater is generally a person whom they love and respect makes the lesson all the more potent.

CONSENSUS ON THE ROOTS OF VIOLENCE

Around the world many societies have begun to focus recently on the need to reduce all forms of interpersonal violence. In most it is not clear whether rates of violence are actually increasing, or whether increased sensitivity is leading to more awareness and reporting of violence. In several, including Australia, the USA, Germany and the UK, high-level commissions have spent months or years sifting the considerable research evidence and seeking to document the underlying causes of violence, and what can be done to reduce and prevent it. Reviewing their conclusions, one finds substantial agreement in their attempts to answer the question: "Why do people become violent?"

For example, the report of the Australian National Committee on Violence concludes in summary:

> Violent behaviour defies simplistic explanation, and generally results from a variety of factors interacting with one another ... it is the Committee's view that the experiences of childhood and the influence of the family are paramount in determining whether or not an individual becomes violent in his or her behaviour. We acknowledge that biological or personality factors may predispose individuals to violence, but strong evidence exists to suggest that in almost every case a loving and secure environment can overcome such predispositions.[1]

Similarly, the American Psychological Association's Commission on Violence and Youth found that

> ... youth at risk of becoming extremely aggressive and violent tend to share common experiences that appear to place them on a "trajectory toward violence". These youth tend to have experienced weak bonding to caretakers in infancy and ineffective parenting techniques, including lack of supervision, inconsistent discipline, highly punitive or abusive treatment, and failure to reinforce positive, prosocial behaviour. These developmental deficits, in turn, appear to lead to poor peer relations and high levels of aggressiveness. Additionally, these youth have learned attitudes accepting aggressive behaviour as normative and as an effective way to solve inter-personal problems. Aggressive children tend to be rejected by their more conforming peers and do poorly at school, including a history of problems such as poor school

> attendance and numerous suspensions. These children often band together with others like themselves, forming deviant peer groups that reinforce anti-social behaviours. The more such children are exposed to violence in their homes, in their neighbourhoods, and in the media, the greater their risk for aggressive and violent behaviours.[2]

In 1995 an interdisciplinary commission established in the UK in the wake of the tragic murder of two-year-old James Bulger by two 10-year-olds published its report, *Children and violence*. It had carried out a wide-ranging review of the research into the roots of violence:

> The most potent of the risk factors are clearly sited in childhood and within the family, and are amenable to change. The best predictor of violence in adulthood is violent behaviour in childhood. But that an individual child becomes violent is never inevitable: families can and often do provide the security and love necessary to protect children - even high risk children - from becoming violent.
>
> Violence is overwhelmingly a male problem, and the roots for this appear to be primarily social rather than biological, highlighting the inadequacies of current socialisation of male children, and the promotion of macho male attitudes and models in society.

The commission went on to make recommendations ranging widely over the whole field of social action. But first it emphasised the need for non-violent values to be promoted in a comprehensive and consistent way, which involves above all reducing and preventing violence to children.[3]

These and other commission reports indicate that much is known about the risk factors for violent behaviour. It is clear that very many factors are involved, and their interaction is complex. Most of the risk factors for violence are the same as for general delinquency. But punitive discipline involving physical punishment and deliberate humiliation appears particularly identified with the development of violent attitudes and actions, in childhood and later life. A new and very detailed study of the available research published in 1994 concluded:

> Research over the past 40 years has been remarkably consistent in showing that hitting children increases the chances of a child becoming physically aggressive, delinquent, or both. The research ... shows that corporal punishment leaves invisible scars that affect many other aspects of life.[4]

In each case, commissions on violence have concluded that ending the legal and social acceptance of physical punishment of children is a key strategy for reducing all forms of interpersonal violence. The Advisory Panel to the Goldstone Commission Inquiry into Children and Violence in South Africa is one of many similar bodies worldwide to make this recommendation.

There is no need for more research. As a South African educator put it bluntly a few years ago:

> It is mind-boggling that the belief in corporal punishment as a teaching aid has become so entrenched. One cannot help but compare people who believe in it with members of the Flat Earth Society. Evidence indicating the detrimental effects of corporal punishment is as indisputable as that indicating that the earth is round. The continued use of corporal punishment is indicative of a psychological and educational illiteracy of alarming proportions.[5]

ROUTINE VIOLENCE: CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

Parents in South Africa, like those in most countries, have the right to use "reasonable and moderate chastisement", including corporal punishment. The latest judgment interpreting parents' punishment rights was in a 1990 case concerning allegations of corporal punishment of a boy, Jan, aged 13 and a girl, Dinkie, aged 14, by their stepfather. The judge confirmed:

> It is settled law that parents have the right and power to administer punishment to their minor children for the purpose of correction and education. In order to achieve this object parents have the right to chastise their children. The chastisement must be moderate and reasonable, even when it takes the form of corporal punishment, which in turn must be restrained and tenable ... It must also be emphasised that a parent who exceeds the bounds of moderation, or who acts from improper or ulterior motives, or from a sadistic propensity, may well face civil and criminal liability.[6]

There has been little formal research into the use of physical punishment in the home in South Africa. But there is no doubt that it is very commonly used and socially approved in most communities.

W.S. Winship, then principal paediatrician and chairman of the Child Protection Committee in Durban, wrote in a recent South African commentary on violence in society:

> Aggressive discipline is practised in many families in all sectors of South African society. Parents who have grown up experiencing harsh physical punishment for even slight misdemeanours apply the same methods of punishment to all their children, often with serious consequences.[7]

The National Children's Rights Committee's outline for a National Programme of Action for Children in South Africa states that in 1989 a children's hospital in the Western Cape reported that 38% of all child deaths under the age of 14 were the result of physical assault, mostly domestic.[8] A survey at the University of the Witwatersrand which interviewed 300 students about their experience of physical punishment reported that 41.2% of black students, 30.4% of English-speaking whites and 8% of Afrikaans-speaking whites said they were not hit at home.[9]

In schools, too, physical punishment remains very common indeed. Case law in South Africa has established an independent right of teachers to administer corporal punishment, in addition to their right *in loco parentis*. In the old South Africa, different regulations on corporal punishment applied to schools established for "Blacks, Indians, Coloureds and Whites"; for Indian schools, regulations issued in 1990 stated that "corporal punishment shall not be applied as a disciplinary measure at any school".[10] It appears that following the elections in April 1994, provinces were told they could decide which regulations should apply to their schools. Many, apparently, were applying the regulations previously in force for "white" schools, which were issued in 1990 under the Education Affairs Act, House of Assembly.

Interview research and newspaper cuttings testify to the widespread use of corporal punishment in schools, often exceeding the limitations imposed by the regulations. One survey of black children in primary education in Bophuthatswana showed that 50% reported being beaten on a daily basis.[11] The survey at the University of the Witwatersrand quoted above revealed that 267 of the 300 student respondents (89%) reported being corporally punished at some stage in their school life — including 163 of the 193 girls (84.5%). In most cases this punishment was conducted unlawfully, in that it took place in the classroom, hands and other parts of the body were hit, unlawful instruments were used and the punishment was not recorded.[12]

An unpublished survey of two Cape Town schools for boys confirmed that corporal punishment was often the first rather than last resort punishment, used widely for petty misdemeanours.[13] Another unpublished survey shows the degree of violence prevailing in schools — hair pulling, kicking, banging heads against blackboards, testicle squeezing and so forth. Girls are reported as being frequently slapped or caned.[14]

In child care institutions, including places of care, children's homes, places of safety, schools of industries and reform schools physical punishment is still widely used. There are regulations limiting its use, similar to those applying to schools, some dating back to 1963.

In the penal system up to 1995 whipping was still permitted as a sentence of the courts for juveniles. But a judgment of the new Constitutional Court in June 1995 declared such punishments to be unconstitutional, and early in 1995 the Minister of Justice Mr Dullah Omar had indicated that legislation would be introduced to end all corporal punishment as a sentence of the courts. This will be the first welcome step towards protecting children in South Africa from physical punishment. In May 1995 the Minister of Education indicated that he believed that corporal punishment in schools contravened the constitution and the UN convention:

> The new Education Policy Bill, which is currently being drafted, will therefore include suitable provisions to abolish corporal punishment of students in schools and other educational institutions. I trust Parliament will give unqualified support to these provisions once they come before this body.[15]

A few days later the Minister of Welfare indicated that corporal punishment would be outlawed in child care institutions, as part of a review of child care law. Thus over a very short period the new government has moved to begin systematic protection of children from corporal punishment, at least in all institutional settings.

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

Alongside growing knowledge worldwide of the dangers of disrespectful and violent treatment of children has come growing respect for children's rights. A reflection of, and a practical tool for developing, this respect is the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). In South Africa, the convention has already been quoted in support of protecting children from corporal punishment. Adopted by the UN General Assembly on November 20 1989, the convention is the first international instrument to set out principles and detailed standards for the world's treatment of its children. Such conventions are binding on those countries which agree to ratify them. In September 1990, 71 heads of states and governments came together for the World Summit on Children in New York, the largest gathering of world leaders in history. They pledged: "The well-being of children requires political action at the highest level. We are determined to take that action. We ourselves make a solemn commitment to give high priority to the rights of children."

In June 1995 South Africa's ratification was announced. By January 1996 over 180 countries had ratified, leaving only a tiny handful still hesitant over their commitment to children.

In his speech accepting the Nobel Peace Prize in 1993, the President spoke eloquently of the priority to be accorded to children when he committed the country to the "relentless pursuit" of the goals for children's survival, protection and development set out in the World Declaration which arose from the 1990 summit:

> At the southern tip of the continent of Africa, a rich reward is in the making, an invaluable gift is in preparation, for those who suffered in the name of all humanity when they sacrificed everything for liberty, peace, human dignity and human fulfilment. This reward

> will not be measured in money. Nor can it be reckoned in the collective price of the rare metals and precious stones that rest in the bowels of the African soil we tread in the footsteps of our ancestors. It will and must be measured by the happiness and welfare of the children, at once the most vulnerable citizens in any society and the greatest of our treasures. The children must, at last, play in the open veld, no longer tortured by the pangs of hunger or ravaged by disease or threatened with the scourge of ignorance, molestation and abuse, and no longer required to engage in deeds whose gravity exceeds the demands of their tender years.[16]

The African National Congress's Reconstruction and Development Programme emphasises that

> The democratic government must support the Convention on the Rights of the Child ... It must work to protect the lives of children, to promote the full development of their human potential, and to make them aware of their needs, rights and opportunities. The needs of children must be paramount throughout all programmes aimed at meeting basic needs and socio-economic upliftment.[17]

And in his speech opening the first session of South Africa's first democratically elected Parliament, President Mandela again re-emphasised the principle of first call for children.

The convention and children's right to physical integrity

The convention upholds children's right to physical and personal integrity, to protection from "all forms of physical or mental violence while in the care of parents or others" (see Appendix I at the end of this chapter for details). It also emphasises that all the rights in the convention at the end of this chapter must be available to all children without discrimination on any ground. Thus no level of violence to children can be justified on grounds of religious belief, culture or tradition. It is important to emphasise this because currently much violence to children is promoted, and justified in the eyes of the perpetrators, by reference to religion, culture or tradition.

People are entitled to freedom of religion only in so far as practising their religion does not break the law or breach human rights. Selective quotations from some religious texts such as "spare the rod and spoil the child" cannot be used to justify breaching children's right to physical integrity. In any case, there is no doctrinal support for physical punishment in any of the world's major religions, and within every religion there will be prominent leaders who will denounce all violence to children and cite texts promoting peaceful problem-solving and non-violent child-rearing and education.

Some people suggest that physical punishment is part of their particular culture; to challenge it is to challenge cultural identity. The fact is that physical punishment and deliberate humiliation of children remains very common in most societies and communities in all countries and continents. As a tradition, it is certainly not "owned" by any particular groups. Historically and geographically, its use has tended to follow enslavement, colonisation and military occupation, as well as certain religious teaching. Some anthropological research suggests that some small-scale societies, notably hunter-gatherer societies, rarely used physical punishment in child-rearing.[18] Ironically, such societies are now generally under threat of extinction.

Understandably enough in the light of its recent past, the new South Africa is particularly sensitive to the need to respect cultural diversity. But the respect must have limits, and international human rights instruments, including the convention, define those limits. The practice of genital mutilation of girls and young women is an extreme example of a cultural or traditional practice which very clearly breaches fundamental human rights, and is no longer acceptable. Other traditional practices involving violence, the most widespread of which is physical punishment, also breach the convention.

An international elected body of 10 experts oversees implementation of the convention. Each country which ratifies, and thus becomes a "State Party" to the convention, must submit a report to the committee on progress towards full implementation; the first report is due within two years of ratification, and subsequent ones every five years. The convention states that reports must contain sufficient information to provide the committee with a comprehensive understanding of the implementation of the convention in the country concerned. Guidelines from the committee on reporting state:

> The Committee believes that the process of preparing a report for submission to the Committee offers an important occasion for conducting a comprehensive review of the various measures undertaken to harmonise national law and policy with the Convention and to monitor progress made in the enjoyment of the rights set forth in the Convention. Additionally, the process should be one that encourages and facilitates popular participation and public scrutiny of government policies.[19]

The committee does not depend on governments alone for information on progress; it also seeks information from relevant international organisations including UNICEF, and from non-governmental bodies involved with children. It may follow up reports by seeking further information from states parties, and government representatives are called to Geneva for formal public sessions with the committee.

Reading through reports (see Appendix II) already submitted by some of the first countries to ratify, and the summaries of discussions with the committee and its observations and recommendations, is an agonising but ultimately exhilarating experience: agonising because of the detailed documentation of the current desperate state of so many millions of the world's children; exhilarating because of the potential of this process of auditing compliance with detailed standards for improving the lives of children.

The committee has paid particular attention to the issue of the physical punishment and humiliation of children. The official report of its fourth session recognises the importance of the question of corporal punishment in improving the system of promotion and protection of the rights of the child.[20]

Some reports from African countries acknowledge the high level of domestic violence. In a male-dominated society such as appeared to exist in Burkina Faso,

> one way of encouraging beneficial change would be for leading personalities in the country, such as political leaders, publicly to make known their abhorrence of the use of violence within the home and their refusal to have recourse to it. A signal of that kind given by respected leaders could be very influential in changing entrenched traditional attitudes, in a way that legal provisions could not do.[21]

In 1991 the Namibian Supreme Court declared corporal punishment in government schools and the penal system to be unconstitutional, and the Ministry of Education launched a campaign for positive discipline, aimed at schools, communities and parents. The convenor of the UN committee, Marta Santos Pais, said that she hoped children, by voicing their opinions, would help to change attitudes and enforce the new legislation against corporal punishment.[22]

Most recently, in January 1995, in its concluding observations on the initial report from the United Kingdom, the committee expressed concern about levels of abuse, and stated that it was "deeply worried" about the information brought to its attention regarding judicial interpretations of the present law permitting "reasonable chastisement", in cases of physical abuse of children within the family (in the UK, as in South Africa, the law permits parents and other carers to use physical punishment provided it is "reasonable"), and recent court decisions in the UK had condoned the beating of children with implements including belts and sticks, causing heavy bruising.

Since then, the UN committee has proposed prohibition of physical punishment, in the family and in institutions, in examining reports from eight other countries: Spain, Poland, Belgium, Canada, Sri Lanka, Germany, Portugal and Italy.

Thus the committee has made it abundantly clear that deliberately hurting and humiliating children in the name of punishment or treatment is not compatible with the convention; thus over 180 of the world's countries are committed to upholding the convention and so to protecting their children from all forms of violence. (See Appendix 2 at the end of this chapter.)

THE SITUATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

Whether they know it or not, the world's governments, including the South African government, are adopting a detailed recipe for raising and educating children without violence or humiliation, and for designing juvenile justice systems for young offenders based on rehabilitation not retribution. On the basis of the available evidence, we can confidently predict that this recipe, coupled with other economic and social reforms being attempted in the Reconstruction and Development Programme, will dramatically reduce all forms of interpersonal violence. The convention provides an imperative with the force of international law for reassessing our attitudes to and treatment of children. As Alice Miller writes in *For your own good: the roots of violence in child-rearing*:

> We are still barely conscious of how harmful it is to treat children in a degrading manner ... We don't yet know, above all, what the world might be like if children were to grow up without being subjected to humiliation, if parents would respect them and take them seriously as persons ...[23]

APPENDIX I

The UN convention and children's right to physical integrity

The convention provides a clear framework for protecting children's right to physical integrity, to protection from all forms of interpersonal violence:

The Preamble refers to the "*equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family*" as well as children's rights to "*special care and assistance*".

It is Article 19 which asserts the child's right to protection from "*all forms of physical or mental violence*": "*1 States Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child.*

"*2 Such protective measures should, as appropriate, include effective procedures for the establishment of social programmes to provide necessary support for the child and for those who have the care of the child, as well as for other forms of* *prevention and for identification, reporting, referral, investigation, treatment and follow-up of instances of child maltreatment described heretofore, and, as appropriate, for judicial involvement".*

Thus this article, while including protection from what is commonly defined as "abuse", goes further in covering *"all forms of physical or mental violence"*. It also goes beyond the prohibition in Article 37: *"No child shall be subjected to torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment"*.

Article 2 insists that all the rights in the Convention must be available to all children *"without discrimination of any kind, irrespective of the child's or his or her parent's or guardian's race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status"*. Thus no form of violence to children can be justified on such grounds as race, religion, culture or tradition.

Article 3 insists that in all actions concerning children, *"the best interests of the child must be a primary consideration"*. A number of other articles are relevant to gross breaches of the child's right to physical integrity: the right to life and maximum development (Article 6), involvement of children in armed conflict (Article 38), and sexual and other exploitation and abduction (Articles 34, 35 and 36).

Relevant to the right to physical integrity in the school context is article 28(2): *"States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that school discipline is administered in a manner consistent with the child's human dignity and in conformity with the present Convention"* — i.e. in conformity with Article 19, without any form of physical or mental violence.

Article 24.3 obliges states *"to take all effective and appropriate measures with a view to abolishing traditional practices prejudicial to the health of the child"*. This was drafted with particular reference to the practice of female circumcision — genital mutilation of girls and young women; it is relevant to any traditional practice which may threaten the physical integrity and/or health of the child.

Article 39 obliges states to take *"all appropriate measures to promote physical and psychological recovery and social integration of a child victim of: any*

> *form of neglect, exploitation or abuse; torture or any other form of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment; or armed conflicts. Such recovery and re-integration shall take place in an environment which fosters the health, self-respect and dignity of the child".*

APPENDIX II

Worldwide progress to end physical punishment

There is now rapid and accelerating progress towards ending physical punishment of children all round the world, much of it as a response to the UN convention, and reflecting acceptance of the weighty evidence of the dangers of the practice. In some countries in all continents, physical punishment in schools, child care institutions and the penal system has been prohibited for many years (Poland prohibited it in its schools as long ago as 1783). In Africa, it appears that school physical punishment was prohibited by decree in Burkina Faso in 1965, and it is not permitted in Botswana. As indicated above, in Namibia, the Supreme Court declared corporal punishment in government schools and the penal system unconstitutional in 1991.[24] In Zimbabwe the Supreme Court declared sentences of whipping or corporal punishment for juveniles unconstitutional in 1989. But following the case a constitutional amendment has been agreed to permit corporal punishment of juveniles.[25]

Six countries have so far formally prohibited all physical punishment of children by parents and other carers (Sweden, 1979; Finland, 1984; Denmark, 1986; Norway, 1987; Austria, 1989, and Cyprus, 1994). Research following legal reforms in the Scandinavian countries has documented entirely positive effects. In Sweden: "The law has dramatically reduced physical punishment and commitment to it. It has broken the inter-generational transmission of the practice. It has helped to reduce serious child-battering ... Professionals in particular have welcomed having a 'clear line' to transmit to parents".[26] Recent (1994) research commissioned by the Department of Health and Social Affairs in Sweden found only 10 per cent of a representative sample approving of physical punishment.[27]

In Germany legislation against physical punishment has been drafted. In Ireland, the governmental Irish Law Reform Commission has proposed that full prohibition of physical punishment should follow a government-sponsored education campaign. In Poland a governmental body reviewing constitutional changes has proposed legal reform. In Switzerland a governmental committee on child abuse has proposed explicit prohibition. In the UK, the Scottish Law Commission has proposed strict limits on physical punishment of Scottish children. In New Zealand the Governmental Commissioner for Children has campaigned for legal reform and promoted an education campaign, with booklets, posters and teaching packs. In Canada the Federal Ministry of Justice has commissioned studies and is considering legal reform in the light of the UN convention.

ENDNOTES

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CHAPTER 9

■

BEING HUMAN VS HAVING HUMAN RIGHTS[1]

Cosmas Desmond

Ratifying United Nations conventions on the rights of children or anybody else is undoubtedly an improvement on the apartheid regime's refusal to do so. That regime believed it knew — by divine inspiration — what was good for "our Bantu"; they had nothing to learn from anybody. The antidote to that, however, is not the belief that we have everything to learn from everybody, particularly from Western countries and the United Nations. UN documents might serve some purpose as statements of intent; they also sometimes provide a useful stick with which to goad governments into action. This is particularly true of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, since governments have to submit regular reports on its implementation. But such documents are far from being either the first or the last word on the subject of human rights.

We, too, as Africans of the south, should also have something to say in the light of our experience of the most systematic violation of human rights since Nazism. (We might also bear in mind that the worst of all violations of human rights took place in Africa, through the capitalist-inspired slave trade which paved the way for people to be treated as less than human.) The people who experienced the degradation and brutality of the apartheid period are not only testimony to "Man's inhumanity to man [which] makes countless thousands mourn" (Robert Burns); they also have much to teach us about how it is possible to retain one's humanity and dignity despite the concerted efforts of governments to deny them. Likewise, we can learn much about commitment, courage, and resilience from children who resisted the apartheid regime's attempts to dehumanise them, and who survived experiences which would have left most people totally traumatised. A few were brutalised (i.e. "made brutal", not "treated brutally") as is evidenced by their subsequent behaviour; the vast majority, somehow, were not.

We cannot, and should not, simply forget that history and climb aboard the human rights bandwagon, which is essentially a vehicle for liberals going nowhere. While I do not wish to minimise the importance of protecting human rights, I do think there is a danger of turning a professed concern for them into a fetish and ignoring the causes which led to apartheid's total disregard for them. Now to recognise that people have rights does not in itself compensate for what they suffered through their violation. The various covenants and conventions cannot be written on a *tabula rasa*.

People's commitment to human rights cannot be measured by their enthusiasm about United Nations documents on the subject or debates about a Bill of Rights. Human rights are about people, not about laws. A genuine concern for them can only arise from an experience of their denial. My own, such as it is, comes from having spent many years doing little else than ferrying children dying of malnutrition to hospital — only to return later to pick up their bodies for burial; from seeing people, mainly the old, women, and children, moved around like bags of mealie meal; from visiting banished people; from friends being detained, tortured and killed. More recently, I met a family in Port Shepstone whose plight reflected virtually all the evils of apartheid, compounded by the violence, for which apartheid was largely responsible. An old and frail couple were struggling to raise three small grandchildren. They had absolutely no source of income; their I.D. books had been destroyed when their house was burnt down, so they could not claim their pension. Their daughter, mother of the children, had been shot dead in her bed, together with another daughter. The father, like so many others, had simply disappeared. They were trying to put together some sort of shelter, while the children, with a marked lack of enthusiasm, played among the debris and dust. The youngest child, then aged one year, had been taken by the killers and placed on her dead mother's breast, where she was found some hours later.

These children are not only orphaned, destitute, homeless and hungry, they are also doubtless traumatised by their experience; however there is no-one to diagnose whether they are or not, let alone to provide treatment. The family is isolated from the community — it is still considered dangerous to consort with those who have been targeted for attack — and from the broader society; there are not, in any case, many resources available in remote rural areas. The grandparents are too old and frail to make contact with any agencies which might help them; they have few hopes; they have learned that it does not help to complain. School feeding schemes, housing finance programmes, and urban-oriented development projects will not benefit them (they will be dead before any "trickle-down" effect reaches them), nor will a liberal commitment to human rights. They, and they are by no means untypical, need first of all to be kept alive before they can even think about other rights. And not much effort appears to be being made in that regard.

I, therefore, have little time for the liberal debate about the precise content of a Bill of Rights. Indeed, I believe that in a truly democratic society, where the people exercised real control both over the political process, with politicians being truly accountable to them, and over their workplace, there would be no need for such a provision. The promulgation of a Bill of Rights is a recognition of the failure of liberal, or social, democratic government and provides an excuse for that failure: "We believe in human rights; it is not our fault that they are not respected." Believing in human rights, however, does nothing actually to give people those rights.

HUMAN RIGHTS AND HARSH REALITIES

The most basic human right is the right to live, and to live as a human being. In the course of my research on forced removals, on unemployment and on violence I have seen tens, indeed hundreds, of thousands of people who have been denied that right, though according to the terms of reference of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission this is not considered to be a "gross violation of human rights". Killing one person, particularly a white one or perhaps a prominent black one, is "gross", but sentencing millions of black children to death from malnutrition appears to be considered par for the course. We cannot even begin to compensate for that oppression by now subscribing to a Western-defined concept of human rights, with its emphasis on individual actions. Apartheid itself was a crime against humanity, and until the effects of that crime have been extirpated there is not really much point in talking about human rights. People cannot be treated as human beings if they are forced to continue to live in inhuman conditions, as so many are. If all people are now to be treated in the same way, the result can only be continued inequality; affirmative action is required even in the field of human rights in order to make up for the past complete denial of those rights.

Many people, including some of our political leaders who personally experienced the grossest violation of their human rights, seem to have forgotten just how total was that denial of human rights and seem unaware of how they continue to be denied to many people. Much of the debate, therefore, is simply not rooted in reality; it is based on a pretence that we are now living in a normal society and thus can discuss such questions in the same way as they do in other societies. We have a democratic and free society, so what do the people have to complain about? Hungry, homeless and jobless they might be, but they do now have the right to better things. The right without its realisation does not, however, seem to be of much consolation to them.

Even in more normal societies, as various human rights documents note, some people, notably children, do not only have the right to be treated equally; they have a right to special care and protection. However, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, for example, cannot spell out what this means in South Africa, where children have suffered, and are suffering, more than anybody. A child in Port Shepstone, for example, when asked to write about his experience of violence, wrote: "My father was burned. My uncle was burned. My mother was burned. We ran away."

How does one compare that experience with any number of years in prison? And what point is there in assuring him that the ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child now entitles him to special protection? Are the politicians aware of how many children died, unnecessarily — most of them would have lived with proper medical care — while they were in prison or exile? (My own research showed that 22% of children forcibly removed died before reaching the age of five.) Do they, with their newfound excessive wealth, really understand how desperately poor so many people are and have been for several generations? (How can a person "earning" R400 000 a year begin to understand how a woman earning R3 day — when she can find work — can feed, clothe and educate a family? How can anybody for that matter?) Even in prison they had shelter and some sort of food; millions still have neither. Have they forgotten what abject poverty is about? Or do they really believe that ratifying conventions and signing protocols will solve the problems?

BEING HUMAN VS HAVING HUMAN RIGHTS

During the long days of "the struggle" there was little talk about human rights: people were more concerned about *being* human than *having* human rights; the latter was seen, almost intuitively though rightly, as essentially a liberal preoccupation. In the time of "transition", however (I use inverted commas because I doubt that most politicians really understand where we are coming from and have even less idea of where we are going to) there has been much talk about nurturing a culture of human rights. A laudable aim, but one which will not be furthered by ratifying conventions and passing bills of rights. Such "human rights instruments", based as they are on the possessive individualism of Western thought and practice, are designed to serve the interests of the ruling élite: they define as fundamental the rights that are fundamental to them, particularly their personal freedom to accumulate wealth. Thus, Hayek (1960) — the guru of Margaret Thatcher, who in turn is becoming something of a guru to many of our leaders — tells us that inequality is not only the inevitable result of liberty; it is also the justification for it: "if the result of individual liberty did not demonstrate that some manners of living are more successful than others, much of the case for it would vanish" (*The constitution of liberty*, p.85). Not only *will* the poor be always with us; they have to be so that we can appreciate just how well off we are.

Such documents — declarations, covenants, conventions — afford recognition to rights in the abstract but do nothing to give practical effect to them. Of what use is the right of freedom of speech to a starving, unschooled child in a rural area, who has nothing to say except, "I'm hungry"? You cannot literally eat your words. Or the right of freedom to movement to one who does not even have the busfare to the nearest village? They are free to go where they want; but they have nowhere to go.

UNDERLYING ASSUMPTIONS

My scepticism, perhaps even bordering on cynicism, about UN documents does not arise from their lack of enforceability, though it is true that the UN does not, and cannot, do anything about governments who solemnly ratify a convention and then proceed totally to ignore it; it has even been known to take five years just to compile a report on a country's non-compliance. I am more concerned about the arrogance of the assumptions underlying them.

Emphasis on those rights which suit the lifestyles of the ruling élite

Where there is inequality, within or between nations, as Latin American theologian, Jan Luis Segundo (1974) writes:

> the dominant class or nation declares its own values to be rights. It does not do this because it is willing to distribute them to others. On the contrary, it does this because it possesses these values and also the means of controlling the operative mechanisms of justice (which could vindicate the rights of others and ensure their proper distribution). As a result the fight for these values is waged in an atmosphere where it is doomed to failure from the start. To believe that the poor nations need merely invoke the shibboleth of human rights is to succumb to a costly naiveté. (p. 40)

In other words, the West, or the ruling élite, has no problem with recognising rights which do not threaten the status quo. The abuse of children, for example, does not further their interests — except perhaps in the case of child labour, about which they tend to be rather ambivalent — but so-called free enterprise does. So they condemn the former and promote the latter. The rights which are recognised, however, are so hedged about with restrictions and limitations that they are practically meaningless. For the vast majority of people the rights to a house, a job, education, water and other basics are far more important than the abstract right to freedom of speech, movement and association. The élite *have* jobs, houses etc., not just the right to them; they need the other rights in order to protect what they have.

Loose definitions and arbitrary terminology

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights — cornerstone of the professed attempts to build a human rights culture — having declared itself against sin in all its guises, then states:

> In the exercise of his rights and freedoms, everyone shall be subject only to such limitations as are determined by law solely for the purpose of securing due recognition and respect for the rights and freedoms of others and of meeting the just requirements of morality, public order, and the general welfare in a democratic society.

An individual's rights are certainly restricted by the rights of others, but the degree to which this is so is "determined by law". And who determines the law? The ruling (and, in our case, liberal middle class) élite. Liberals, because of their social position, rarely need personally to have recourse to violence — though they do it vicariously on a grand scale — but they do cherish their right to say what they like. Thus, on the one hand, violence is categorically condemned as a means of achieving recognition of one's rights while, on the other, the "right" of racists to propagate their views is upheld, even in relation to the Afrikaner-Weerstandsbeweging. And despite the explicit exclusion of that right in the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination.

An even bigger loophole is provided by the provision that people's rights may be limited "for the purpose of meeting the just requirements of morality, public order, and the general welfare". Again, who defines these concepts? The Nationalists, for example, decided that racial mixing was "immoral"; they could, therefore, claim that they were not violating the declaration when they prohibited people from marrying (though that would have been the least of their concerns, since they had not even signed it).

The interests of "public order" or "national security" have been used by every fascist or other authoritarian regime in the world to "justify" repression. Every violation of human rights in the former Soviet Union, for example, was "justified" on the grounds that it was necessary for the "general welfare", or common good. It is no violation of human rights to silence and even imprison people for the sake of the common good; but in the Soviet Union the common good was identified with the good of the party. (And there are ominous signs of the African National Congress following the same path, confusing the good of the ANC with the good of South Africa by, for example, allowing a country's former relationship with the ANC to influence South Africa's foreign policy.) No government has ever acted contrary to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights — according to their definition of its provisions.

The assumption of Western as normative

The declaration lays down some general principles, which are valid — if they are not rendered vacuous by their generality; it then goes on to apply these principles to the conditions prevalent in Western society. (This is not surprising, since the declaration was adopted primarily by First World countries: the Communist countries abstained, and there were few Third World countries among the original 51 members of the United Nations.) All it is saying, therefore, is: given that the Western, liberal, democratic society is the ideal form of society, these rights should be accorded to people. And that is all it can say. It cannot give any guidance about what you should do if you happen to believe in some other form of society, since it simply assumes the normative value of Western society. But Western society, because of its idolatry of individualism, is an essentially unequal society.

Recognition of human rights vs creation of a just society

The UN documents reveal some confusion on the part of their authors about the relationship between the recognition of human rights and the creation of a just society; in fact, they are self-contradictory. On the one hand, the preamble to the declaration states that the "recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is *the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world*". On the other hand, Article 28 says: "Everyone is entitled to a social and international order in which the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration *can be fully realised*." The same contradiction is found in the preamble to the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. It first virtually repeats what the declaration says about human rights, but then goes on to say, "in accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the ideal of free human beings enjoying civil and political freedom and freedom from fear and want *can only be achieved if conditions are created* whereby everyone may enjoy his civil and political rights, as well as his economic, social and cultural rights" (my italics). The Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights says the same. *This is not a question of the relationship between* *different kinds of rights, but of whether the recognition of human rights leads to or follows from the establishment of a just social order.* The declaration and the covenants reply with a decidedly equivocal "Yes".

That the recognition of rights does not lead to a just and equitable social order is surely evident from history. As the preamble to the much-heralded Convention on the Rights of the Child itself says:

> ... the need to extend particular care to the child has been stated in the Geneva Declaration of the Rights of the Child of 1924 and in the Declaration of the Rights of the Child adopted by the General Assembly on 20 November 1959 and recognised in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (in particular in articles 23 and 24), in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (in particular article 10) and in the statutes and relevant instruments of specialized agencies and international organisations concerned with the welfare of children.

All these fine words, however, did little, if anything, to improve the lot of children. There has, fortunately, been some progress since 1990 as a result of the World Summit on Children rather than because of another convention. That progress, however, does not appear to extend to preventing the abuse, particularly sexual, of children. While better reporting of such cases may be partly responsible for our increased awareness of the problem, it cannot provide a complete explanation for what has been described as an "epidemic" of child abuse in South Africa. It is really not very helpful to assure children that they have the right not to be abused while they are still being abused and will continue to be until the conditions which caused the spread of this practice are changed. (In fact, they do not have the right; they only have the right to the right.) They need to have the right, if only to gain protection from the few deviant people who doubtless exist in any society and, perhaps, to bolster their own self-esteem and confidence; but it is practically useless as a means of preventing abuse in our present society. There were, no doubt, isolated incidents of child sexual abuse even in traditional African society but, apart from other considerations, it would have been physically impossible for it to have been as widespread as it now is, such was the network of support in the family and in the community. That has gradually and often deliberately — on the part of the Nationalist government — been broken down. Until it is rebuilt no number of conventions will stop child abuse. Tackling the problems of homelessness, poverty, unemployment, political violence, refugees and the other apartheid-induced ills of our society is more important than any solemn ratification of the convention's abstract provisions.

"THE SYSTEM" AND CHANGE

At least from the mid-sixties, it was widely recognised by those involved in the struggle that apartheid was something a lot bigger, and much more sinister, than the sum total of individual actions: it was "The system" which was the problem. As Albert Nolan, a theologian, wrote in 1988, "The system in South Africa has a momentum of its own, a driving force that keeps it going. It is the incentive of money or profit ... [Money] is our god and the pursuit of money is our religion." The momentum may have been halted — primarily by the mass of the people — but the driving force is still there. To reverse the momentum of apartheid, if momentum can be reversed, it is necessary to create a new system and not only to concentrate on a different set of individual actions.

To believe that persuading people to subscribe to the notion of human rights will necessarily lead to the establishment of a more just order is take a very individualistic and moralistic view of society. But people do not violate other people's human rights (I am talking about human rights in general, not just the issue of child abuse) because they evil; they are evil because they violate them. Why, then, do they do it? Usually because it serves their interests to do so: that is their purpose or end, and violating other people's rights is a means — seen by them as "necessary" — to that end. In South Africa that end has generally speaking been — and to a large extent still is — the maintenance of white political control and economic superiority. To secure the recognition of human rights, it does not help to persuade people to change the means; it is the end that has to be changed. Otherwise they will simply find other more socially acceptable ways of achieving the same end, and the vast majority will be just as badly off, as regards their material conditions, as they ever were. Making it possible for all people to enjoy human rights, rather than just having an abstract claim to them, requires an overall, and even revolutionary, political programme; not simply a moralistic and legalistic concern for human rights. It is not possible, for example, for the human right to equality to be recognised in a capitalist society, since inequality is its very *raison d'être*. It is based on the recognition of people's individual qualities, such as competitiveness (for which read "greed"), not *human* ones.

Of course, capitalists will tell us that greed, selfishness, acquisitiveness, aggressiveness — all of which contribute to "success" within that system — are part of human nature, so we just have to accept that there are and always will be people with such attributes. But that is simply a facile attempt to maintain the status quo. That there are only too many such people in the world is undoubtedly true. But if they are only acting according to their nature no blame can be attributed to them, even if their actions adversely affect other people, and nothing can be done to change them; by the same argument, however, thieves too are blameless. People can act contrary to their nature, but they cannot do so because of their nature. It cannot be natural to act unnaturally. The fact that we are probably all sometimes selfish, greedy, etc. only shows that we are not yet fully human. Human nature is not static; it, therefore, cannot be defined simply in terms of what is; the ability to change is also part of human nature. We must, therefore, also be concerned about what can be, and should be. But if greed is an immutable part of human nature, inequality is similarly natural and there is nothing we, or declarations of human rights, can do about it.

Changing people's attitude to the victims of that inequality is not going to change either the individuals or society. As John Davies (1971), one-time chaplain at Wits University, has noted:

> An idea which can be shifted by argument is only an opinion, it is not a belief arising out of a person's real being; and the shifting of such an opinion is not going to change the person. People's real beliefs are derived from deep social experience, as Marx saw so clearly, and the way to change people is to face them with a new social experience. (Davies, 1971, p. 222)

In a changed society people would have to change, since they cannot cut themselves off from society; they have to relate to it. What they might think about in the privacy of their conscience would be totally irrelevant.

INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS: A CONTRADICTION

A preoccupation with individual rights not only cannot create the condition for a just society, it also reinforces the existing inequalities, because it stresses the individuality — which is the basis of differences, distinctions, and consequently inequalities — of people rather than their humanness, which is the foundation of all human rights. It can also trivialise the whole concept of human rights, turning them into little more than a fertile source of litigation for those who can afford to hire lawyers; the United States provides innumerable examples of this, with disastrous consequences for social and community life. In Canada, according to Professor Cotler, "there is a joke that the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms has become a form of Lawyers Unemployment Relief Act in the sense that it has created a new cottage industry for lawyers" (in Cowling & Barret, 1991, p. 99). Not a very good joke. Already, in South Africa, I have heard lawyers talking excitedly about the prospect of children being able to sue their parents for violating their right to privacy by entering their room, even if they did so because they had reason to believe that drugs were being hidden there. How would the successful prosecution of such cases do anything to improve the miserable conditions of millions of children in South Africa? Most do not have a room for parents to go into; many of them don't even have parents. The creation of a human rights culture certainly cannot be left exclusively to lawyers, as it tends to be in South Africa. What is important, as Edmund Burke says, is not "what a lawyer says I may do; but what humanity, reason, and justice tell me I ought to do".

In any event, to talk of "individual human rights" is a contradiction in terms: they must be one or the other. Thatcherites claim that there is no such thing as society; only a collection of individuals. It is closer to the truth, however, to say that there is no such thing as an individual without society. People are the people they are because of their relationships with other people in society. "My sense of identity", wrote Terry Eagleton many years ago, "is derived from society. To be fully a man (sic) is to be fully in community with others ... I am an individual to the extent that I discover myself as one through others" (in Cunningham et al. 1966, p. 10). For an African, as Edison Zvobgo of Zimbabwe has pointed out, an individual in isolation only has potential rights, which become actual in relationships with other people (in Brown & Maclean, 1979).

My individuality is something I possess; it is that which differentiates me from other people and makes me unique. Our humanity is something that we have in common; that which we share with everyone else. If rights were the preserve of individuals, it would not be possible for everyone to have them, since they could not at the same time belong uniquely to each person. Even if it were possible for everybody to have them, they would be useless, since there would be nobody to recognise them; everybody would be concerned with their own. We are, in a sense, individuals and we have the right to develop our own individuality; but not by arrogating to ourselves that which is common to all. People may lay all sorts of claims to a greater share of both material resources and power, but they cannot claim it as a human right, since everybody is equally human, whatever their individual qualities — their I.Q., their industriousness, their morality, their colour, their history or anything else. Some qualities might establish some sort of claim — usually one backed by *force majeur* — but nobody can claim to be more human than anybody else. To say that all people are equal does not mean — as Hayek, for one, suggests — that everybody is the same; the opposite of equal is unequal, not different. It means that nobody can claim a greater share of anything *as a human right.*

The ownership of vast tracts of land, for example, cannot be defended as a human right. It might be a legal "right" within the existing legal system, but it is clearly not necessary to own such vast amounts in order to be human; nor is it possible for all human beings to own so much. It cannot, therefore, be a *human* right; by definition "human" is that which is common to all individuals. It might well be necessary and justifiable for some people to have more land than others — if, for example, they are using it productively for the benefit of society — but that has nothing to do with human rights; it is a question of economics.

This provides a typical example of how the Western concept of rights is assumed to be the only one. Traditional African society, however, had a very different concept of ownership; much less individualistic and, therefore, much more human — and humane. Everybody had a right to access to land, but nobody owned any. What was owned, as Max Gluckman (1965) has written, was

> a claim to have power to do certain things with the land or property, to possess immunities against the encroachment of others on one's rights in them, and to exercise certain privileges in respect of them. But, in addition, other people may have certain rights, claims, powers, privileges and immunities in respect of the same land or property. Hence when we say that a particular group of kinsmen owns land, we are also saying that all members of that group exercise certain rights over that land.

Those people were certainly human; not even the most ardent apartheid propagandist, if they are now to be believed, ever even suggested that they were not. The exclusive, private ownership of land is, therefore, not necessary to make one human. It cannot, therefore, be a human right; it is only a Western right. And one that throughout history has not been recognised by most people.

The concern with the rights of the individual, as opposed to human rights, also leads to endless, and basically irrelevant, debate about such questions as the relationship between freedom and equality — between the freedom to exercise political and civil rights on the one hand, and equality in the enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights on the other. More recently, the question of environmental rights has been brought into the debate, and we are told that there are three generations of rights, prioritised, of course, according to how Western society rates their importance. (For me, "three generations" refers to the length of time it will take to have any rights for all people realised in practice rather than to the relative importance of different rights.)

Rights *cannot* be categorised in that way in theory, and *are* not so categorised in practice: generally speaking, a minority enjoy all of them and a minority none of them. If people are reduced to a less than human condition economically, they cannot be treated as fully human politically, and vice versa. The economic deprivation of black people under apartheid, for example, owed much to the fact that they lacked any political power to do anything about it; while, being economically deprived, they had no means of obtaining that power. And there is not much point in having the right to freedom of speech if you are so suffocated by pollution that you cannot even speak. For all people to be fully human, which is what a human rights culture should be about, they all need all rights.

If all people had equal political freedom, they would also have economic equality, since nobody would have the means of taking advantage of anybody else. Likewise, if everybody were economically and socially equal there would be no need to restrict anybody's right to political freedom. It might well mean curbing the excesses of a minority, but that would not be a restriction of their human right. Nobody has the *human* right to be more free or more prosperous than anybody else.

There can only be conflict between rights if they are seen as entities which belong in their entirety to individuals: the debate is really about whether some individuals, because of their particular qualities, should be free to exploit others. The Western liberal tradition has sought to evade the issue of the indivisibility of human rights either by talking about rights which are irrelevant to most people or by limiting the definition of "individual" to members of their own class or group: the others are simply "the masses", whether they be blacks, women or the poor. John Stuart Mill, for example, considered that there were "exceptional individuals [among whom he doubtless included himself] who, instead of being deterred should be encouraged to act differently from the masses". And when John Locke, very much the father of liberal individualism, spoke about the rights of "everyone", he was referring only to property-owning males.

The main concern of liberals is that *their* rights, particularly the right to freedom of expression (not that they really have very much to say) should be inviolate; they claim, totally illogically, to have the *human* right to be *individuals*; only those who have the same individual qualities have the right to be treated equally. But, if we are talking about *human* rights, they do not actually have any; they *share* in them and have no more claim to a greater share than even the most illiterate member of the masses. Human rights are something shared on the basis of our common humanity; nobody can have any one of them fully unless everybody else does; the smaller the whole, the smaller my share necessarily is. Freedom is indivisible not because every individual has a right to it in its totality, but because we all share in the totality. Metaphysical poet though he was, John Donne's realisation that "No man is an island" has some very practical implications.

A GENUINE HUMAN RIGHTS CULTURE

The concept of a common humanity, however, is something totally foreign to Western minds and tends to be dismissed as nothing but a romantic notion. In African culture, on the other hand, it appears to be taken for granted (why, for example, do Africans always greet each other in the plural?) and to extend not only to the relationship between people but also to the relationship between them and their environment, particularly the land. Being neither an indigenous African nor an anthropologist, I will not attempt to expand upon that. (I am trying, rather, to persuade Mazisi Kunene to expand upon a seminal paper he presented at a UNESCO conference some twenty years ago in which he made the essential distinction between the individual and the human; relationship with the land also figured prominently in his presentation. Poets and philosophers, as I have said before — thus outraging some lawyers — probably have a greater contribution to make to the development of a human rights culture than do lawyers). I sense, however, that an African understanding of the world — an African cosmology (yes, there is such a thing even though it has not been formulated in Western academic language) — provides the only basis for a genuine human rights culture. The present efforts in that direction seem to be concerned simply with minimising, accommodating or *ignoring* the differences between people rather than emphasising what we all have in common — our humanity. Africa, albeit in its more northern parts, was the cradle of humanity; why should not the southern part be the nursery for a really *human* rights culture?

If we wish to develop a human rights culture, we first need to discover, or perhaps rediscover, a culture. Perhaps there is some significance in the fact that the word originally referred to tillage of the soil. Must we perhaps learn to relate to the land before we can relate to each other? Can human rights ever be respected in the cut-throat — literally and metaphorically — urban world? I do not know the answers, but maybe we should be asking such questions instead of assuming that the West already provides all the answers and has them all neatly written down in conventions and covenants. I do, however, know that a human rights culture cannot be imposed by law, nor can it be superimposed on an inherently unequal, virtually anarchic and extremely corrupt society, which is what we presently have in South Africa. We need to prepare the ground before it can be tilled or cultivated.

In saying that, I am not harking back to the Codesa-speak of "levelling the playing field". When we speak of human rights we are not playing games: we are talking about people's lives. And I have no desire to level the mounds which mark the graves of the millions who died. What I am saying is that we must undo the past before we can build the future: we must harrow and weed before we can plant. That has not yet been done; instead we seem to be pretending that there were not really any weeds in the first place, only wrongly planted seeds. It was all just a mistake and now we can just start afresh, with everybody committed to nurturing a culture of human rights.

Apartheid was not a mistake, it was all too deliberate: everything was planned, almost down to the last turn of the thumbscrew. "Efficient" is not the first word that springs to mind to describe the did-you-got-a-licence apartheid system; but only now, perhaps, are we beginning to realise how effective it was in achieving its aims, such as that of preventing the rise of an African nationalism. (Otherwise, why are the ANC and the IFP still killing each other?) It was certainly more efficient at destroying homes than the Government of National Unity is proving to be at building them; the old security forces were also much more adept at arresting people.

What apartheid created can hardly be called a "culture". It was, nevertheless, more than just a system of laws — though they certainly had enough of them. It was an evil, all-pervading ethos which, among its many inhuman consequences, destroyed any sense of community and any culture of caring, both of which are essential prerequisites for building a human rights culture which goes beyond a selfish concern for "individual rights". We can, however, learn something from that system: not from what it did, but from how it did it. We need to be as relentless in our commitment to building as the Nationalists were in theirs to destroying. They actually recognised the potential of the people and went to extreme lengths to thwart it. The Government of National Unity is certainly not going to similar lengths to realise that potential. Instead, it speaks of the need to "empower" the people. But people do not need empowering to know that they are human. And that is the most important thing about them.

CONCLUSION

Perhaps all that I am saying, or have said, is that before we can begin to talk about human rights we need to know what it means to be human rather than selfish, acquisitive individuals. And people who have been oppressed for hundreds of years know more about that than bureaucrats and academics who quibble about the legal expression of rights. "Poverty", as Marx said, "is the passive bond which causes the human being to experience the need of the greatest wealth — the other human being." And he is the one who is supposed to be concerned only with "economic man"!

Obviously, economic growth is essential in order to meet the needs of people — not that, anywhere in the world, it does much for those who need it the most. But if that is the be-all and end-all of our existence, as increasingly appears to be the case in the new South Africa, with the effect on foreign investment being the determining factor in every policy, we can do no more than pay lip-service to a human rights culture. (Children, for example, are more likely to be removed from the streets lest they inconvenience foreign tourists than because it is in their best interests.) Perhaps we have to choose between being a rich country or a human one. We cannot all be rich; the earth's resources are too limited. We could, however, all be human. The law cannot make people human, but maybe people can make the law, and society, human if only those in power would take them and their needs seriously and actually listen to them, instead of importing and imposing ready-made "solutions" from the West.

People who pride themselves on being hard-boiled politicians and realists, or "objective" academics, will dismiss such a conclusion as sentimental nonsense. That is why the world, run by politicians and analysed by academics, is in such a mess: wars, even genocide; increasing poverty, even mass starvation; the raping of the environment. Soviet-style communism clearly failed, but how successful has capitalism been for the vast majority of people in the world? Has it, for example, really improved the human quality of life in such highly "successful" countries as Japan or Singapore? Might it not just be possible that we need a radical reappraisal of our approach to the problems of the world? And maybe the wisdom needed does not come with a PPE (specialist Politics, Philosophy and Economics degree from Oxford). We certainly have not found all the answers, and human rights documents will not provide them, but perhaps we are not even asking the right questions or talking to the right people.

ENDNOTES

1. This chapter draws heavily on previous publications of mine, especially *Persecution East and West* (Penguin, 1983) which, for whatever reason and for better or worse, was not distributed in South Africa.

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CHAPTER 10

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POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS IN CHILDREN: PRESENTATION AND INTERVENTION GUIDELINES

Gill Eagle & Catherine Michelson

This chapter concerns a specific sub-group of children affected by violence, i.e. those who can be classified as having been exposed to trauma. While the specific domain encompassed by trauma in psychological and psychiatric literature remains somewhat unclear (Levett, 1989), there is some consensus concerning the nature of the kind of event trauma makes reference to. In the DSM-IV the traumatic precipitant of post-traumatic stress (incorporating Acute Stress Disorder and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder) is described as encompassing both the following two features:

1. The person experienced, witnessed, or was confronted with an event or events that involved actual or threatened death or serious injury, or a threat to the physical integrity of self or others.
2. The person's response involved intense fear, helplessness or horror. Note: In children this may be expressed instead by disorganized or agitated behaviour.

(American Psychiatric Association, 1994, pp. 427 and 428)

Terr (1983) further qualifies this definition by arguing that the experience is generally "surprising, unanticipated and piercingly intense" (p. 1544) and is real rather than imagined. Thus trauma generally encompasses life-threatening or potentially injurious events and tends to be shocking in that it is usually unexpected. Although they may respond differently and to different aspects of traumatic stimuli, both adults and children can present with features of post-traumatic stress. In the case of South African children, based on other information in this publication, the most common exposure to critical incidents of a traumatic nature is being caught up in political warfare in townships and rural communities, exposure to criminal attacks (housebreaking, car hijacking) and child rape. While much of the material that follows may have relevance for other forms of violence, it must be emphasised that child abuse and neglect and incest need to be conceptualised somewhat differently because of the systemic and often recurrent and prolonged nature of the abuse. Thus, while there may be some overlap, an eight-year-old girl brutally raped by a gang member is likely to experience this violation differently from an eight-year-old girl bribed (or threatened) into sexual activities with her older cousin over a period of months. While the effects may be equally damaging, the first child is more likely to present with the features associated with post-traumatic stress. The child who has experienced sexual abuse would be more likely to develop chronic behaviourial and psychological problems, such as sexual precocity and low self-esteem. The symptoms of post-traumatic stress tend to be more acute and to fall predominantly within the range of the anxiety disorders.

Further consideration needs to be given to trauma that is ongoing. The DSM-IV differentiates between Acute Stress Disorder and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder on the basis of the duration of symptoms (acute being less than three months). Straker and Moosa (1994) and Herman (1992) refer respectively to continuous traumatic stress and complex traumatic stress. Essentially they argue that there are contexts in which victims are exposed to multiple, repetitive and/or prolonged trauma, producing variations of the disorder. For example, somatic and depressive symptoms may be intensified. In the South African context, particularly during the apartheid era, large numbers of township youth experienced a series of violent events without access to a safe haven (Straker & Moosa, 1994). Their capacity to process these extremities was further compromised by a lack of physical and emotional support. Certain contexts remain the focus of ongoing political and criminal activity, exposing numbers of children to the precipitants of what has been conceptualised as continuous traumatic stress. Thus workers in the field need to be alert to this form of the disorder within contexts of extreme and prolonged violence. These conditions may require modified forms of intervention.

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS IN UNDERSTANDING TRAUMATISED CHILDREN

One of the key findings in research into traumatised children has been the importance of the role of adult/older caretakers in mediating the experience for the child (Eth and Pynoos, 1985a). This mediation can impact in both positive and negative ways on the child. Thus children with resilient, containing, affirming caretakers with the capacity to absorb and modify the nature of the experience for the victim/survivor may help a child to negotiate traumatic experiences with less damaging consequences. Parents who avoid, blame, criticise or become overwhelmed by the crisis may further exacerbate symptoms in children in these areas. The Dawes and Tredoux (1989) study in Crossroads points to the correspondence in symptom severity among children and their mothers following an attack on the settlement.

In addition to adults mediating the impact of direct trauma on children, children's dependence on adults also places them at risk in a further regard in relation to trauma. The witnessing of trauma is known to have potentially damaging effects on both adults and children, but because of their vulnerable and often developmentally incapable location in the world, children may feel particularly overwhelmed and helpless as bystanders to critical incidents. These feelings are most severe when the victims of attack are the child's caretakers or loved ones. The high levels of civil conflict over the last decade in South Africa have exposed numerous children to just such circumstances — that is, when they have not been the direct targets of violence themselves. The disturbances arising out of witnessing violence have been documented in numerous South African studies, focusing both on the era of extreme state oppression, with conflict between political and community groups and police and military structures, and on later violence enacted between rival political groupings and even widespread criminal activity. Witnessing caretakers stripped of their potency and autonomy can be extremely frightening for children. Such disturbances have been identified in children's drawings and play and also by means of symptom checklist reports.

Studies of children of holocaust survivors have documented vicarious traumatisation at an even deeper level, that of "contagion" or "secondary traumatization" (Lyons, 1987). Thus children who had no direct experience of concentration camps, have reported vivid dreams and related symptoms stemming from an experience as if they were reliving their relatives' trauma. While such experiences have not been documented in South African studies, it is quite conceivable that some children may be affected by such introjected trauma, for example internalising the impact of torture and detention on a close parental figure. In considering the impact of violence on children it is important to remember that parental exposure to critical incidents may well have such indirect effects on children.

THE PRESENTATION OF TRAUMATIC STRESS IN CHILDREN

The effect of trauma on children can manifest in different ways, depending particularly on their stage of development. As a general principle the most common pattern of response involves regression to an earlier mode of functioning. In many cases children who have already attained developmental milestones, such as constructing sentences or dressing unaided, may revert to a previous level of incapacity. This is particularly true of toilet-training. The symptoms manifested in children tend to parallel the broad categories of response identified for adult trauma survivors in DSM-IV. These include intrusion, avoidance and hyper-arousal. In fact the DSM-IV diagnosis tends not to differentiate between the presentation of adults and children, other than to indicate where symptoms may manifest in a particular equivalent form. For example, for the adult symptom of "Recurrent and intrusive distressing recollections of the event", a comment attached indicates that in children this may manifest in "repetitive play ... in which themes or aspects of the trauma are expressed" (American Psychiatric Association, 1994, p. 428). One further point to note is that two periods of development tend to be the most vulnerable: toddlerhood (+/- 3-5 years) and adolescence. This is because these periods involve the negotiation of separation and individuation from parents, albeit to different degrees. For a child who is trying to gain his/her independence from parents as a normal aspect of growth, it may be very confusing and frustrating to be reduced to a helpless and needy state and may delay or prevent necessary development. While most children regress after trauma, some adolescents may try to establish a false independence. However, the following discussion will deal in detail with each phase of development and describe the manner in which traumatic symptoms are likely to reveal themselves. Although there will always be individual variations, it is useful to be aware of likely patterns of symptoms.

Developmental stages and traumatic stress symptoms

The infant

Babies' responses to trauma are largely expressed in physical distress: sleep problems, feeding difficulties, diarrhoea, frequent illnesses and irritability (Ayalon, 1980).

Early childhood (0 - 5 yrs)

The world of young children revolves around the family and home. In addition their motor control is still developing and their physical needs have to be met by older caretakers. Their thinking is still egocentric and somewhat irrational, and they might find it difficult to distinguish between reality and fantasy. They may still be immature in their emotional development, finding it difficult to delay gratification or tolerate frustration, and tending to express their feelings very openly and uninhibitedly. Any disruption in their home life is likely to be very upsetting and they will be deeply sensitive to their caretakers' reactions.

Pre-school children

Very young children can initially appear withdrawn and subdued, and some even become mute. In addition they are likely to become clingy and nervous. They may start bed-wetting, become afraid of the dark and develop other imaginary fears. Some children may throw temper tantrums and display destructive, disruptive behaviour.

Middle childhood (6 - 11 yrs)

During this period children move between the home and the outside world as a point of reference. School has become an important part of life, including relationships with other adults, like teachers, and other children. These latency age children can now grasp the meaning of trauma more fully although their thinking capabilities are still not completely developed. Piagetian theory would place these children in the concrete operational stage of thinking. They are incapable of utilising abstract or hypothetical constructs. For example, they may be unable to appreciate that violence may be motivated by political ideals rather than personal hatred. Many of these children show their distress by becoming withdrawn and isolated. They are also likely to develop problems with schoolwork for a range of reasons, including depression, intrusive thoughts, concentration problems and attempts to shut out what happened. Relatives report that children seem both different and inconsistent. Well-behaved children may become rude and argumentative, and normally active children can become passive and inhibited. A child's behaviour may vary between unprovoked outbursts of aggression and withdrawal. In addition they may display repetitive play of the situation and develop problems in peer relations. Physical symptoms such as stomach-aches and headaches are also common (Pynoos and Eth, 1985).

Adolescence (12 - 18 yrs)

Adolescence has received much attention in psychological literature. It is viewed as the time of transition from childhood to adulthood. The peer group and the social world begin to take on at least as much importance as the family. Abstract thinking and moral reasoning can now become fully developed. Central concerns for the adolescent are the establishment of a personal value system and a sense of identity.

To some extent the responses of adolescents to trauma begin to resemble those of adults. One possible consequence of trauma, mentioned previously, may be a premature entry into adulthood and the establishment of foreclosed identity. Many adolescents may choose to "act out" their distress following trauma in the form of rebellion, substance abuse, precocious sexual activity, school truancy, delinquency and political activity. Some of these activities may help them to cope but others may place adolescents at serious risk. Other adolescents may display almost the opposite picture, becoming withdrawn, isolated and depressed, and questioning the meaning of their existence. Attempts at dealing with the trauma may involve debates over political/social issues or becoming involved in political organisations.

Thus it is clear that a child's age determines different levels of physical, emotional, cognitive and social development and varying location in society. These factors influence very directly the manner in which traumatic stress is displayed. Perhaps most significantly the cognitive processing of traumatic material appears to determine the degree to which the experience is integrated. Horowitz's (1986) information processing model of trauma adjustment argues that the constellation of symptoms connected to avoidance and intrusion represent an adaptive attempt to incorporate the material into existing cognitive schemata in a manageable way. This inevitably involves a process of adaptation or alteration in one's thinking. For children, whose cognitive framework or thinking capacity is still in the process of development, this task becomes more complex. In some cases coming to terms with trauma may stimulate cognitive development precociously, whereas in other cases cognitive rigidity or more immature ways of thinking may ensue. Children's thinking about trauma may serve either an adaptive or a defensive function.

While the emphasis has been on areas of difficulty, it must also be borne in mind that trauma sometimes elicits extraordinary coping capacities in individuals. Donald and Swart-Kruger's (1994) article on street children debates this point of damage versus resilience. However, it is clear that many children need and can benefit from assistance when exposed to trauma. The following section looks at some guidelines for such intervention.

INTERVENTION GUIDELINES

The aim of intervention is to repair children's ability to manage their own experience. This should enable the child to think about and make sense of the trauma, integrating it into the rest of his or her functioning. In addition, it is crucial to strengthen children's connection with their existing support system, and if necessary to bolster the system.

The preferred approach for working with traumatised children is multidimensional. As outlined in the previous section, we see that many factors influence the presentation of traumatic symptoms in children. These include the type of trauma experienced, the developmental stage being negotiated, and the role of adults in mediating the experience for the child. These need to be taken into account when selecting appropriate intervention strategies.

Intervention with children who have experienced trauma needs to be timely and thorough. An early intensive and rigorous exploration provides a child with immediate relief from the distress experienced following the trauma, and prevents the development of chronic symptomatology.

Principles of intervention

Support

Immediately following the trauma, what is important is the need for a stable and holding environment, i.e. primary maternal care. As trust and a sense of safety have been often shattered and the child is at his/her most regressed, there is an immediate need for a good external figure. Some sense of safety needs to be re-established before the trauma can be worked through. Such a sense of safety can be provided by any caring figure who is perceived as protective, e.g. an older brother or sister or a teacher. The establishment of safety may be needed at both a physical and a psychological level. In situations of ongoing trauma a particular form of support may be necessary. The child's repressive coping defenses need to encouraged until such time as real danger has passed. Only after the child is no longer experiencing ongoing trauma can the past trauma be worked through. Thus the essential distinction between working with acute as opposed to continuous traumatic stress lies in the degree to which repressive mechanisms (e.g. dissociation or denial) need to be supported, rather than exploring the experience of the trauma more fully.

Intervention should be developmentally appropriate

A serialised course of treatment in relation to successive developmental stages is necessary (James, 1989). The reason is that a child's attribution of meaning changes at different stages of development, moving from the more concrete to more abstract meanings attributed to events. The type of treatment chosen would thus suit the developmental stage of the child. One would also need to take into account that children often regress to an earlier level of development, requiring intervention *appropriate* to the *regressed behaviour*.

If a child has experienced an earlier trauma, his or her recent experience might resonate with the prior experience, reactivating earlier anxieties and feelings. To deal effectively with the present trauma, the earlier experience may need to be renegotiated. Often, this might precipitate a regression in the child's behaviour in an attempt to cope with the early anxieties. However, if this is anticipated and accepted in treatment, the child can be assisted to return to previous levels of development as he or she becomes able to tolerate and integrate the experience.

Involvement of family

As mentioned previously, research has found that adults are crucial in mediating the experience of trauma for children.

Following a trauma, the family environment is typically fraught and tense. Many of these environmental factors may impact negatively upon the child's ability to deal with the traumatic experience. If the family reacts to the trauma in an adverse way, this could affect the child's ability to deal with the trauma within the family. For example, if a parent responds to the child's description of the trauma by becoming overly emotional, the child might refrain from talking about the incident. Traumatised children often state an unwillingness to speak out at home because they are scared of causing repeated distress in their mothers. Thus family distress may inhibit emotional mastery in children since affective expression becomes constricted, further inhibiting the ego's ability to deal with painful affect.

Parents are encouraged to provide containment and an opportunity for children to ventilate their feelings. Indeed parents can be used both as co-therapists within the session as well as extenders of the therapeutic work into the family context. By encouraging the child to talk about the trauma at home, the parent is able to mediate the experience for the child, thus facilitating mastery. By allowing the expression of painful feelings and demonstrating that these feelings are not damaging for others, the parents may model effective forms of emotional expression to the child. In order to be able to use parents as assistants in the intervention with children, it is often necessary to do direct work with the parents. They may well feel guilty about the trauma their child has experienced. Such feelings need to be dealt with prior to involving them in the treatment of the child. Garmezy (1985) describes three factors that he sees as constituting a "triad" of protective factors for traumatised children. These are: a positive personality disposition, strong external support (peers, organisations) and a warm, supportive family milieu. By involving caregivers in our interventions, we attempt to develop the latter two factors.

Working with primary caregivers, we are able to achieve multiple goals within and outside of the intervention itself. Firstly, the intervention is extended outside the realms of therapy. Adults are made to feel more potent and useful in the therapy by being given guidelines on how to deal with the trauma within the family and the community. Thus caretakers can be educated about:

i. the impact of their behaviour on children;

ii. the importance of demonstrating resilience, i.e. that their own capacity to cope with the trauma provides a crucial model for the child;

iii. providing containment for children's frightening feelings by allowing them to ventilate these feelings; and

iv. affirming children and their attempts to deal with the trauma.

These interventions will modify and mediate the nature of the traumatic experience for the child and restore a sense of competence to parents at the same time.

Involvement of the community

Treatment needs to extend from involving the child and his or her family, to the community. Frederick (in Pynoos & Eth, 1986) suggests that treatment paradigms need to focus on traumatised communities as well as the caregivers. Such caregivers would include trauma teams, mental health workers and any other community members involved in the care of traumatised children. Central people could include extended family members, teachers, church groups, and civic associations. Working with a range of community members would not only provide a direct benefit for the child by providing an environment of support, but would also serve an important educational function. Education can inform the community about the effects of violence, and empower communities to set up and utilise community resources.

In many countries there is automatic support for victims of natural disasters, including many South African cases. However this is different with human-induced disaster, such as most of the trauma faced by children in South Africa. These victims seldom get emergency treatment, direct service or skilled help. In contrast to victims of natural disasters, their loss is a personal one, not a loss of property. The loss of home and property is far more easily identifiable and empathised with than the loss of self-esteem, sense of personal worth and physical integrity. Working with community members would facilitate support, acceptance, and empathy for the victims of trauma, and may be even more crucial in situations that would not automatically elicit support for these victims.

Having contextualised intervention at a broad level, the discussion now turns to more specific goals and methods in therapeutic interventions.

MODELS OF INTERVENTION

Pynoos and Eth (1986) have described a format widely ascribed to for working with children who have experienced forms of psychological trauma. The structure of this intervention involves three distinct phases.

The opening phase engages the child by having him or her draw a picture and tell a story, or involves free play with the child. These projective tasks help to establish a focus in the therapy by providing links with the intrusive worries of the child concerning issues associated with the trauma. The second phase involves working through the trauma. Detailed attention is given to the child's perceptual and affective experience, exploring all the relevant issues in depth. Finally, in the closure phase the child's present and future plans are reviewed.

A similar format used for working with victims of trauma is used by a team of psychologists working in the Department of Psychology at the University of the Witwatersrand. This is a four-stage model of trauma counselling. While there is a great deal of overlap with the above model, two different areas have been stressed. The four stages of the trauma debriefing model include:

Retelling the story

The focus here is on the thoughts and feelings experienced during the trauma. The person is encouraged to recount the story in detail, including any sensory memories such as smell or touch associated with the trauma. The person may also be asked to recall the worst moment of the trauma as this is often the material that causes the most intrusive anxiety.

The most crucial aspect of all treatment strategies is the emphasis on re-exposing the child to the traumatic experience in a structured and supportive manner. An important point made by James (1989) is that we often try to shield children from the trauma by avoiding the incident and preventing the child from re-experiencing the incident. One of the basic therapeutic principles concerns emotional mastery. A person's ego is strengthened by gaining such mastery. When the child faces traumatic material and realises that he or she is able to bear these overwhelming feelings, a sense of personal strength is attained.

Strategies that would apply to younger children include writing, drawing, story-telling, music and puppetry. The choice of activity should be developmentally appropriate and can be negotiated with the child. These techniques could all be used to aid the focus on the traumatic experience, so that the event can be explored in its entirety, without avoiding aspects that might be too painful to the child or the therapist. This exploration might lead to temporary increases in symptoms as traumatic memories are focused on. Parents should be informed of the possibility of this occurring and reassured that this does not represent a negative outcome of the therapy, but is part of the working through and is therapeutically valuable.

Normalising the symptoms

Having achieved a degree of emotional mastery by working with painful affect associated with the trauma, the difficulties the children are experiencing are elicited. Any symptoms that they might experience are anticipated and discussed clearly with them (see the DSM-IV). Children are also reassured that their symptoms are a natural response to extreme stress ("a big shock") and will improve with time.

Reframing the guilt or self-blame

The child's understanding of his or her own role in the trauma is explored and reframed. Children often feel responsible for the trauma happening and that they should have done something to prevent it. These negative feelings need to be acknowledged and understood. The therapist has to provide an active stance to assist the child in reframing his or her behaviour in a way that attributes responsibility to the perpetrator of the violence, and so allow the child to regain self-respect.

Re-establishing coping

To facilitate their sense of mastery of the trauma, the response of children during and after the trauma is affirmed. Fantasies of revenge are explored as well as fears concerning their impulse control. At this point they are assisted in re-establishing their level of previous functioning. This may include making active use of support systems and re-engaging in everyday tasks of life.

It is a common finding that many children experience frightening dreams or fantasies relating to revenge. This is often the only means at the child's disposal to turn around feelings of helplessness, adequately to assign blame and responsibility, and to put further threat to rest (Eth & Pynoos, 1985b). For example, a 7-year-old child who was brutally raped at knifepoint by a stranger on the way home from school had this dream: she and her family find the rapist, take him into the back shed and tie him up. With the knife used to threaten and silence her during the rape, she cuts out the rapist's tongue and cuts off his genitals. He is then stabbed to death by members of her family. The child expressed relief at the exploration and discussion of these fantasies. Her parents also reported a shift in her mood, a return to school and a marked decrease in her fear to walk back along the road that she had been abducted from. It is necessary that the fear of the fantasies and impulses be addressed, so as to avoid later inhibitions in the child's life. The exploration of the fantasy enables children to get some closure around the trauma, thus starting to heal their shattered sense of boundaries and allowing them to feel more competent in dealing with tasks in their immediate life.

Comment

The importance of enabling the child to assimilate the experience is stressed. For this to occur a balance is sought between the avoidance and the intrusion of traumatic anxieties (Horowitz, 1986). These are optimally integrated by a process of accommodation and assimilation of the trauma. In other words, a balance needs to be struck between assimilating the experience into the child's self-concept while developing coping strategies that do not allow these experiences to incapacitate the functioning of the child.

What differentiates trauma work with children from trauma work with adults is their different levels of thinking capacity. While one would want adults to think about the trauma themselves, a therapist may need to work far more actively with children to develop a conceptual picture. A frame of reference may need to be provided for children to assist them to work out what has happened in a form which they can accommodate and assimilate into their existing understanding. For example, the child's enactment or drawing of the trauma, representing a preverbal level of symbolisation, may be given symbolic coherence by the therapist's empathic description of this in words, thus allowing the child to incorporate the material more successfully.

There is a great deal of overlap between the Pynoos and Eth (1986) model and the Wits debriefing model. The first two phases of the former (i.e. "opening" and "trauma") correspond to the first step of the debriefing model, "retelling the story". The final phase ("closure") also corresponds with the fourth step of the model, "re-establishing coping responses". Where the models differ concerns the work in normalising the symptoms and dealing with the child's guilt and self-blame. These additional steps are explicitly added to ensure comprehensive coverage of issues, although they may well be assumed in the Pynoos and Eth model.

STRATEGIES OF INTERVENTION

Having described an overarching model for therapeutic intervention, some specific applicable techniques are briefly described.

Projective methods for working with the trauma

It is often difficult to access the child's experience of the traumatic event directly, because their use of language is limited. The use of semi-structured projective techniques provides a non-threatening way of making a link between the intrusive anxieties and the trauma. The type of technique chosen would depend upon the child's developmental level and cultural exposure to different types of media, as well as the nature of the trauma.

Getting the child to draw a picture and then tell a story is one of the most common methods used. This technique has been shown to have cross-cultural applicability and efficacy in eliciting traumatic material. Other projective methods such as play-acting, using dolls, puppets, painting, music and writing can be used. Puppets and dolls provide more concrete tools and are useful for younger children. Older children could make use of letter-writing as a technique for telling their story. For instance, as a task in therapy, one might suggest writing a letter to an absent friend explaining in detail what had happened to them. The application of these techniques has to take into account the specific child's familiarity with various materials used. In other words, if a child has not been exposed to painting, a technique that the child is familiar with should be used instead.

Psycho-educational work

A great deal can be achieved by psycho-educational interventions. Such intervention can take place in numerous settings. These include working with the family and educating teachers to provide opportunities for children to express their fears and experiences of trauma. The classroom can become an environment that is containing and allows children to feel less isolated when their experience is universalised. Some effective programmes have been developed and used by teachers, e.g. when dealing with death and death anxiety. Civics and church groups could also provide the same function as teachers in educating the community about the effects of trauma and about the importance of providing support and empathy to survivors of trauma. If communities begin to grapple with and attempt to counteract violence, this may allow for greater closure around the trauma.

The final section of the chapter provides an illustration of the material covered thus far, including both presentation and intervention, by means of a detailed case study of a traumatised child. Names and personal details have been changed to protect the identity of the child.

CASE STUDY

Background information

The case concerns the treatment of a 5-year-old pre-school child Pumi and her mother Monica. They live with her two younger sisters and brothers. Monica has minimal contact with or support from her husband, and is primarily supported by an aunt and sister. The household live in a small home in Alexandra township and exist on a very small income. The relationships within the household appear to be warm and supportive. Pumi did not appear distressed by the absence of her father, since she and her mother appeared to have a particularly close relationship. Despite their poverty they appeared to be a stable family unit, who were well integrated into their community. There was no previous history of any psychological or physical problems in Pumi.

The incident

Pumi and her mother presented at the Alexandra clinic five days after Pumi had been raped by a man known to the family. She was playing with another child when she was lured into a shack and sexually molested. On realising that her daughter was missing, Monica went looking for her. She was led to the shack by Pumi's friend but found it locked from the inside. On returning home, Monica found Pumi sitting on the pavement crying. Her clothes were torn and after some time she told her mother what had happened to her. Monica was very angry and wanted to seek revenge. Pumi became extremely anxious whenever she saw the perpetrator, as he lived in the area. Monica went in search of the perpetrator and informed the Comrades (informal youth leaders in the townships) of the crime. Two days after the incident he was found attempting to rape another child. The Comrades went in pursuit of him and he ran away. He has not been seen since.

Presentation

Monica presented with feelings of extreme anger, helplessness and isolation. She was overwhelmed by the abuse of her child and her current life circumstances. Due to her own emotional response to the rape, she was incapable of providing adequate support and containment for Pumi.

The major feeling presented by Pumi was extreme anxiety associated with the perpetrator. She was afraid he would attack her again and was extremely watchful. She had also wet her bed since the trauma. She was described as having become clingy, not wanting to let her mother out of her sight. She also appeared to be moody and quite withdrawn, not engaging in her usual play. This behaviour was discrepant with her usual happy and outgoing manner. The symptoms were in keeping with the developmental stage of a pre-schooler.

Intervention

Session 1: Support and involvement of the family

Initially, rapport was established with Monica and Pumi. It was clear that Monica's response to the event made it difficult for her to provide the necessary support and mediate the experience for Pumi effectively. However the initial intervention had to focus on her as mother, as she was the major caretaker and was most central in providing a milieu conducive for Pumi to work through the trauma.

The initial intervention entailed getting Monica to retell her story, exploring her perceptions, thoughts and feelings, and eliciting emotions of anger, loss and helplessness. Her feelings were legitimised and supported. In exploring Monica's anger towards the perpetrator she was helped to contain some of these feelings, thus enabling her to assist more effectively with Pumi. As her anger shifted, feelings of sadness emerged, revolving around a sense of a loss of safety, and the loss of Pumi's innocence. Having always been the protector, provider and caregiver, Monica felt she had failed at this task because she had not been able to protect her child from the abuse. Feeling overwhelmed by responsibility and a sense of aloneness, her own needs for support and care became apparent.

Monica's feelings of failure were reframed by helping her to explore the positive aspects of her response to her child's abuse, both during and following the event. Her feelings of inadequacy were reframed by emphasising how much she cares for the children and how much effort she puts,into raising them. Providing Monica with support for her feelings enabled her to acknowledge her sense of being overwhelmed and needy. The counsellor was able to address Monica's difficulty around a sense of responsibility and aloneness. This was followed by discussing her perceived sources of support.

Having dealt with many of Monica's difficulties, the focus was shifted to looking at how she could provide assistance to Pumi to deal with the trauma. Because Pumi was 5 years old, her verbal capacity was limited. It was thus necessary to encourage Monica to assist Pumi to develop a conceptual picture and understanding of what had happened to her, thus assisting Monica herself to become an active therapeutic agent. Monica was encouraged to provide loving, supportive and consistent care to Pumi. She was also encouraged to get Pumi to talk about the incident, while containing her own feelings about it.

Although present during this session, Pumi was occupied with drawing a person, while the focus of the intervention remained with Monica. Their simultaneous presence in the room did not seem to pose any difficulties. This was partly due to the fact that Pumi was unable to understand English.

Had the perpetrator still been present in the community, the focus of the intervention would have shifted. The therapist would have had to assist Monica and Pumi to deal with their real feelings of anxiety and to look at appropriate means of coping and protecting themselves. For example, the broader community network may have been enlisted to become vigilant and supportive of the household. Dealing with trauma in such contexts often requires both pragmatic and therapeutic interventions. In the therapeutic domain, the presence of real danger would circumscribe the exploration of deep feelings associated with the trauma, as more emotional energy is required to deal with the external environment. This approach would be in keeping with the broad principles outlined in working with continuous traumatic stress.

Session 2: The debriefing

Monica appeared more contained and had a renewed sense of safety and hope, which had been absent in the previous session. They had heard that the rapist had been killed, removing the continued threat of his presence in the community. Pumi also appeared more cheerful and confident than in the first session. Monica assumed that Pumi was well and had got over the incident. However, the therapist felt that Pumi still required an opportunity to ventilate her concerns.

Retelling the story

Using Monica as a translator and co-therapist, the trauma was explored with Pumi. Although initially reluctant to speak, she began to speak more freely about the incident and was encouraged to recount the story in detail, focusing on the worst moment.

Pumi cried when describing the details of the rape. Her mother hugged and reassured her. Monica came to the realisation that her child had not dealt adequately with the rape, and that she needed to be more sensitive to Pumi's feelings concerning the attack. Monica's positive and supportive handling of her daughter's pain was reinforced. By assisting the therapist to elicit the story from Pumi, Monica was also provided with a role model in terms of how to engage and support her child.

Normalising the symptoms

Pumi's frightening feelings were normalised by reassuring her that a horrible thing had happened to her and that these feelings were a natural consequence. She was also told that she might have bad dreams about the rape, and was informed that the feelings would get better over time.

Reframing the guilt or self-blame

Monica reassured Pumi that she loved her and that the rapist was a bad man. Pumi expressed her feeling of being a bad girl. She was reassured that she was a good girl and that her mother would hit the rapist if he returned. Monica assured her daughter that she was safe.

Re-establishing coping skills

The child was asked what she would wish to do to the rapist. Her fantasies concerning her wishing to hurt the rapist were explored. Her response during the rape was affirmed, to facilitate mastery of the trauma. Her braveness and survival were supported.

Family support and psycho-education

Practical precautions that Monica had taken to ensure Pumi's safety were discussed. Possible ways of helping Pumi to continue to cope with the event were also explored. The following strategies were identified: playing with her, giving consistent love and attention, talking about the event when it arose, and thus not treating the assault like a secret.

Monica expressed a desire to help other children who had experienced similar attacks. It was thus evident that she had become more confident about her own caretaking capacity and felt that she had been educated about trauma and provided with skills which she wished to share with others. In this sense the intervention appears to have empowered Monica and perhaps enhanced her mothering in general.

Comment

On follow-up both Monica and Pumi appeared to have benefited from the intervention and seemed to have returned to a more relaxed state. The case highlights a number of the broad treatment principles previously outlined and indicates that focused short-term intervention can be very effective in the treatment of child trauma. In this case the therapist was fortunate to have had the willing co-operation of a very concerned mother and also to have been able to intervene fairly immediately following the attack. These factors certainly aided the treatment.

CONCLUSION

It is hoped that this chapter will assist people working in the field to identify traumatised children and to employ the principles suggested for treatment. In discussing trauma specifically, this chapter complements other chapters on specialised areas such as corporal punishment.

As the rest of the book indicates, South African children have not been immune to the range of violence that has beset our society. Although capable of great resilience, children may also be unrecognised casualties in many social contexts. Several other chapters have focused on the position of children in human rights debates. We would argue that access to treatment for traumatised children should be viewed as part of these rights. Untreated traumatic stress can significantly hinder the psychological and social development of children and adolescents. Maladaptive attempts to deal with trauma can impair scholastic progress, family relationships, identity formation and moral development. Such features are central to the establishment of a healthy society. Treating traumatised children represents an investment in South Africa's future.

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CHAPTER 11

WORKING WITH TRAUMATISED CHILDREN: A COMMUNITY PROJECT

Sheila Miller

INTRODUCTION

"Sibonye[1] is stuck," said his crèche principal, and went on to add that she meant this literally, as he "spends all his time in the 'block area'", playing rather mechanically with blocks and small vehicles and simply cannot be persuaded to take part in any other activities. At mealtimes, she said, he ate voraciously, never seeming satisfied. The only place other than the block area that he would go to was the classroom of a teacher of an older group of children. She let him sit close to her while she worked and in the eyes of the rest of the staff was "spoiling" him. Tandi, the principal, an experienced and calm person, conveyed a sense of deadlock. This three-year-old was obviously engendering desperation and despair. Her comments showed that she had genuine concern for the boy himself but was also worried about what it meant to other children that he was allowed to miss the story ring and other activities. The "problem" was affecting crèche routine and also causing some staff tension between herself and the member of staff who was "spoiling" him. The staff had all been patient with him thus far, and now that the end of his first year was approaching she felt something needed to be done.

Behind this "problem" lies not pathology but a tragedy. Sibonye's parents both died of AIDS, first his father over a year before and some months later his mother. The family had lived in a country adjoining South Africa but Sibonye and his older sister are currently fostered with an uncle and aunt in Gauteng. Although naturally the family is stressed by the situation, being themselves bereaved as well as having taken on an enormous responsibility, the children are well and lovingly cared for. But Sibonye remained, Tandi told us, very clingy at home, and wanted to call his aunt "mother" which enraged his nine-year-old sister, Boniwe, who would cry out desperately, "Don't you know our mother is dead?". Boniwe herself was often angry and hostile to her foster-mother, Pindiwe, and her teacher was worried that she was not performing to potential.

The setting in which this account was given was a "work discussion" group, led by my colleague, a clinical psychologist, and me, a child and adolescent psychotherapist. The group members were the director, senior trainers, supervisors and some crèche principals belonging to an organisation which runs many excellent crèches in a large township in Gauteng. The organisation invests a great deal of time, effort and financial support in the training of their staff so that child care and the content of activities provided are of high standard. Principals and teachers, like the director, trainers and supervisors, have an exceedingly busy routine with very little time for quiet reflection and discussion. The principal, in addition to strenuous administrative duties, also often has to deal with the personal problems of parents and staff members as well as the behavioural and emotional development of the children. The "work discussion" group referred to was part of a pilot project to explore whether the opportunity for supervisors, trainers and crèche staff to share their pressing work problems, with the assistance of outside consultants, would add a useful dimension to their work.

Sibonye's plight was an example of the extreme and tragic nature of some of the problems which confront staff. Other instances raised ranged from symptoms like biting and separation anxiety, which occur in all settings where young children are cared for, to concerns about precociously sexual behaviour, which might indicate abuse or arise from other causes. But what was most striking was the impact on staff and children of the violence which occurs daily in Gauteng. As well as dealing with traumatic occurrences that impinge on the work in the crèches, it was clear that staff members are also constantly stressed by traumas that touch their personal lives and their emotions. In the space of one meeting, incidents mentioned included: the recent murder of the husband of one of the crèche teachers, the fact that a trainer present had lost her husband in tragic circumstances some while before and been shot and wounded herself at some point; while another trainer voiced her concern about a friend whose home-loving and well-adjusted young son had been killed in a senseless street fight. The course of the discussion revealed the complexities of dealing with the practical and emotional levels of personal shock and distress in the lives of the children and in the community.

THEORETICAL UNDERPINNINGS

The "work discussion" model referred to is based on psychoanalytic theory but evolved from a conviction that mental health services should not be restricted to those who could afford it. A further element was the belief that an understanding of human behaviour and attention to unconscious factors are important in enhancing normal growth as well as treating psycho-pathological conditions. "Work discussion" groups were developed in the pre-clinical course of the Child Psychotherapy Training in the Tavistock Clinic, London. The model is rooted in the object-relations school of psychoanalysis. In England, in the period after World War Two, many adherents of psychoanalysis identified with "the goals of social reconstruction especially as these affected family and social integration" (Rustin, 1995, p. 224). This trend has continued. In the Tavistock Clinic, from its inception in 1920, and in particular after it became part of the National Health Service in 1948, there was alongside individual psychotherapy training a strong emphasis on community work. Consequently the applications of psychoanalysis received great attention:

> Nearly all of the psychoanalytically trained professionals who came to work in the National Health Service at institutions such as the Cassel Hospital and the Tavistock Clinic, seem to have developed deep loyalty to the principles of a universal health service with a community, curative and preventive mental health dimension (Rustin, 1995, p. 224).

A number of different strands can be traced which were later to be adopted in many other countries. Two important figures, among many others, were Balint, who established small groups for general practitioners in medicine, and Caplan, who devised crisis intervention models which have been used extensively in the social science field. The model I describe was developed within this climate of group work with professionals, but was influenced more directly by the concepts of Wilfred Bion.

Bion was a psychiatrist and psychoanalyst who was deeply interested in humankind's dependence on and obligation to society, as well as in the thrust of individual development. These two themes, and the tension between them, structured the contributions he made to group relations work as well as to the analysis of individuals. Although his groups included members with considerable problems, and in his individual practice he treated many severely disturbed and psychotic patients, his insights and concepts proved to be applicable to normal development as well as to psychopathology. In his group work he became interested in the way that a group's unconscious assumption about the purpose of the meetings interferes with the ostensible task of the group (Bion, 1961). His work with individual patients led him to postulate that emotional and intellectual growth depends on containment of anxiety. This process, he thought, commenced in infancy if the main carer of the child, usually the mother, has the capacity to receive the overwhelming feelings of the baby, "hold" them, process them and return them in a bearable form. Repeated experiences of this kind will enable an individual to develop an inner container. During times of stress, or if the internal container has not been developed, individuals will need assistance in tolerating anxiety without acting out destructively. This conceptualisation is known as "container/contained" (Bion, 1962). In institutions and groups, anxieties and destructive impulses will at times of stress overwhelm the containment normally provided by workers themselves and their leaders so that sensitivity and creativity are impeded. At such times an outside consultant can be helpful.

The "work discussion" offers a method of learning from experience and, though based on the concepts of Klein and Bion, is also the result of certain factors in child psychotherapy training. Trainees are drawn from many allied professions because preliminary experience with children is an absolute requirement. During the pre-clinical part of the training, students remain in their original posts and bring detailed descriptions of their work to the "work discussion seminar", one of the modules of the course. In the years following the establishment of the training it became clear to the students (and staff) that exposure to a psychoanalytical perspective was adding an important and helpful dimension to their work in the community. Additionally the psychotherapy training remained rooted in the community professions of teaching, social work, child psychiatry and many others. The "pre-clinical" course was consequently extended to provide professionals who wished to deepen their work but who did not wish to change from their core professions. The "work discussion" module is found to be especially valuable by those choosing to remain in their original work. The group is made up of five or six workers drawn from different professions led by an experienced staff tutor. Meetings take place weekly for an hour-and-a-half.

In the course outline, the "work discussion" seminar is described as follows:

> No particular technique is taught in these seminars. The members are encouraged to consider and to discuss appropriate ways of dealing with the situations after possible 'meanings' have been explored. The aim of the seminar is to sharpen perceptions and enhance the exercise of imagination so that a richer understanding of the personality interactions described may ensue, on the basis of evidence of motivations springing from internal unconscious sources. Education in sensitivity and increased awareness is a gradual process inevitably attended by some form of anxiety. 'Not noticing' is one outcome of the defences against experiencing pain in oneself. Also coming to terms with the fact that there are no experts able to offer instant solutions. (Harris, 1968, p. 2)

This perhaps rather general description has allowed the module to evolve to cover many work situations in the United Kingdom and in many other countries of the world. The emphasis on learning from experience, observing rather than acting on assumptions, which has to apply to the leaders as well as to group members, has meant that the model can be adapted to different settings. It also allows for attention to cross-cultural issues. Although attention is paid to the dynamics of the group, and leaders need to be sensitive to individual states of mind, and to serve a function of containing anxiety, these are not therapy groups. Ideally the seminars should be held weekly over a prolonged period and form part of a broader training encompassing observational as well as theoretical modules. It is also suitable for particular organisations in which the object is to foster understanding of current work, and the aim is to encourage members to think together about their work problems. The didactic input will depend on the issues likely to occur: bereavement and loss was an important concern in the example quoted earlier. An important aspect of the group work is to develop, with the group members, a method of work which is suitable for the particular situation and which fulfils their needs.

FREEING THE GROUP TO SPEAK[2]

To return to Sibonye: when the group had heard about the death of his parents and how he and his sister had been alone with their ill mother for many months and then remained in the house in the care of a relative while she was in hospital until her death, there was a deep silence. It took much time until anyone felt able to speak. (In retrospect one felt that this was a mirroring of the paralysis experienced by Sibonye himself in the wake of his cumulative trauma.) We spent some time asking for more information: some detail about exactly what was happening at school and at home. We also asked for some suggestions from the group. The group members were diffident and, we felt, under pressure to provide a solution. When one of us commented on the effect the details of the history was having on the group this seemed to free people to talk. Comments were made which underlined that as well as the deaths there were many other stressors in the situation. We drew these together, pointing out that the children had suffered multiple trauma and that, as well as losing both their parents, the long illness of their mother had severely curtailed their ordinary activities and opportunities for development. Furthermore they had been subjected to tremendous disruption and were needing to accommodate to new and totally different surroundings. The group found it useful to have it articulated that numbness and lethargy are common in the early stages of bereavement but that these can be much prolonged where there has been cumulative trauma.

In thinking about what the children might have understood of the experience, it also emerged that no one had actually talked to them about the bereavement or much about their parents. There was discussion about whether this would be useful or whether it was better for them to forget about it. I felt able to say emphatically that they needed the opportunity to talk about their experiences and what they knew and understood of what had happened. They might need information as well as sympathy. Nevertheless I also felt it important to enquire about whether open discussion would conflict with cultural tradition. It seemed that this was not the case but that, as often happens, the adults had been preoccupied with practical matters as well as the anxiety of whether it is appropriate to speak to children about such matters. We wondered too whether the particular fears and the sexual implications of AIDS might have made it even more difficult to talk to the children. We all shared a sense of great relief when, following a question, we were told that tests had been done and that the children were HIV-negative. We touched on how difficult it can be for adults to discuss painful topics with children and how this can relate to one's own distressing experiences. We spoke also of the strains that were involved for the foster family who had several children of their own. Though now there was some discussion the mood remained sombre, but this was relieved a bit when my colleague commented on this and linked it again to the material we had been discussing.

The principal indicated that she needed help herself but also that she wanted some feedback for the foster-parents. Upon hearing more about the foster-mother it seemed clear that she would be able, together with her husband, to talk to the children, but that she might need some discussion to prepare her for the task. My colleague offered to provide a limited number of sessions which would focus on her own stress and on her dealings with the children. As it was likely that the little boy did not himself know consciously why he was so troubled and might well find it difficult to articulate this, it was suggested that someone whom he knew well in the school might try to spend some time with him encouraging him to do some free and undirected drawing, to see if either the drawings or his description of them would give any clue to his state of mind. The matter of his clinging to the teacher who was "spoiling" him was discussed in the light of the regression which is usually seen in bereaved children and the possibility that, following the death of his mother, he might fear leaving the side of caring adults in case they might disappear. We also explored whether he was causing any disruption in that class but it seemed he just sat quietly. The "greedy" eating was considered and one of the group members wondered if there had been a scarcity of food during mother's illness, which was a possibility even though the children had not been malnourished on arrival. It was also possible that it was a concrete way of filling an empty mental space or a reminder of an early good feeding experience to which he was trying to hold on.

These points were speculative but were made in an attempt to form an image of the boy's internal state. The importance of ritual was touched on, and group members wondered if the children would be taken back to their home town in the approaching Christmas holiday and whether it would be important to visit their parents' graves. This led to further discussion about ritual and there were some questions about the length of normal mourning processes, the implication being that a year was a long period for such an acute response. We replied, stressing that grief process could be prolonged but that if it continued for another six months without alleviation, one might have to think about a referral to a children's clinic. We were left feeling that our suggestions and contribution seemed rather paltry in the face of the enormity of the problem posed.

At the following meeting Tandi showed us some drawings done by Sibonye in her presence. At first sight they were meaningless scribbles but she explained that the vague circle in the middle was a chair, and that Sibonye, pointing to it, had said something about "mama"; the squiggle next to it was his sister and somewhere on the periphery were some cars.

This was a dramatic illustration of the centrality of his mother in his thoughts as he had not been told what to draw. Tandi said she had been reluctant to ask him if he meant his biological or foster-mother, but the drawing helped to convince her that the loss of his mother still preoccupied him. Group members initially seemed sceptical about whether any of this was pertinent but did become interested. One member puzzled over the meaning of the vehicles, wondering whether they stood for his wish to go back to his old home in the hope of finding his mother, or whether they were related to his memory of coming to Gauteng by car. Tandi said the foster-mother had been talking to the children about their parents and had found it less difficult than she had expected.

The family were going to spend the Christmas holidays in the children's home town and were wondering how the children would react to the experience. The counselling sessions for the foster-mother had not yet taken place, but as we were told that she was still very stressed, an appointment was arranged. We used a portion of the rest of that session to draw together in a more formal way some information on the stages of bereavement in children.

At the following meeting which took place some four weeks later, Tandi told us that the foster-mother had found a considerable improvement in both children. Boniwe was now much less hostile to her, and more tolerant of Sibonye's wish to call Pindiwe "mama". Pindiwe had a scarf which had belonged to the children's mother and Boniwe now wanted Pindiwe to wear it. Boniwe's teacher had reported that there had been an improvement in her schoolwork. By the end of term Sibonye had begun to venture out of the block area and had maintained the improvement so far in the new term. The family had spent the Christmas period in the children's home town, and although the holiday had been successful, to the parent's surprise both children had been pleased to return to their Soweto home. Tandi said that it had been helpful to her to see Sibonye's relationship to the other teacher as part of the bereavement process rather than as spoiling.

We could all acknowledge that a definite shift had taken place but it was also important to point out that the mourning process is not a finite one and that there might be a repetition of the same symptoms or the occurrence of other reactions. Therefore some time was spent alerting Tandi about this possibility by referring to the importance of anniversaries and other triggers which might re-evoke the traumatic memories.

I shall describe now the reasoning which informed the way we went about addressing this problem. On first hearing the account of Sibonye's behaviour, before the history was mentioned, many possibilities came to mind, such as separation anxiety, depression, trauma or abuse. Tandi's tone and the length of time the symptoms had persisted suggested that there was something seriously amiss, and I found myself thinking that this case needed to be referred for an assessment. When the loss of both parents and all the other traumatic elements were revealed, this thought persisted, but I reminded myself silently of the danger of dealing with anxiety by sending the problem elsewhere. As the discussion continued and the group members showed that they had grasped the nub of the problem, both my colleague and I sensed that there was much that could be done by those in the child's familiar surroundings.

Given the scarcity of therapy provision that could be obtained by this family as well as the added strain a referral would involve, even if available, it seemed sensible to address the problem by using the resources of the family and the crèche. For a number of reasons this was, in fact, the method of choice and not just of expedience. Breaking the news about death or giving information about the circumstances is always best done by adults who know the children well and have a sympathetic relationship to them. This would also have the advantage of ensuring that there was space for the children to talk freely in the family about the past. It was, however, important to bear in mind the question of whether these foster-parents could manage the task, and to try and judge whether Tandi, who had to mediate by passing on the information to them, felt enough confidence in the suggestion to do so successfully. Furthermore it was necessary to try to involve the group in evolving the strategy and to address any anxieties or intellectual doubts they might have about it. Comments passed by group members (some of whom knew Pindiwe well) and confirmed by Tandi gave the impression that, although stressed, she had considerable strength. The decision to offer Pindiwe some counselling sessions was based on my colleague's sense from what we had heard that this would need to be only a short-term intervention and could be made within the context of the work. This in fact proved to be correct, but it would not be either practical or desirable for the "consultation" to become a clinical service, though probably some leeway would always be needed to deal with some of individual difficulties outside the group (Irvine, 1959).

The idea of suggesting that someone in the crèche should let Sibonye do some undirected drawing was based on the hope that this might help to make a more direct contact with him than was possible in either the close but regressed relationship he had made to the caring teacher who tended to pet him, or in the cut-off stance he maintained when "stuck" in the block area. The speed with which he addressed what most preoccupied him surprised us. Although very little was said to him, it seems that the serious attention of an adult really trying to receive his communication made him feel understood, and contained some of his unbearable feelings (Bion, 1962). The question arises as to whether it is appropriate to scrutinise drawings in a school setting in the same way as one might do in a contained therapy space. The groups are aimed at fostering an awareness of internal processes and not at teaching an interpretative technique, so it would be important to stress the speculative nature of any comment and the fact that definitive conclusions should not be based on such evidence.

I do not consider that a fundamental therapeutic change has been effected by the strategy employed. The suggestions formulated in the group and carried out by family and crèche staff have provided conditions which facilitate normal mourning processes. One cannot be complacent about the children's long-term development but I trust the intervention will also alert the family to the importance of monitoring their progress.

THE WORK DISCUSSION GROUP

The example of Sibonye and his family has been quoted at length to illustrate one of the possible functions of such a group, but also to serve as a focus for discussing the professional and ethical implications of this way of working. The account, though accurate in itself, gives an oversimplified picture of the much richer but more complicated and at times troubled experience of the four group meetings which comprised this pilot scheme. There were some discussions about the extent to which sexual matters can be discussed with children in African families, and there were allusions to changes in custom pertaining to graveside ritual which could not be developed in the time available. These allusions hinted at considerable problems around what traditional beliefs and customs should be retained, and at a struggle to sort out what is a justifiable evolution and accommodation to modern life. This is of course not restricted to South African life but perhaps over time there might be space to elucidate the particular elements that affect daily life in Gauteng. As white psychologists and psychotherapists, we were aware that issues of race and culture were bound to have a bearing on the course of the work. This particular organisation has a long history of good working relationships between black and white workers, though there must inevitably be complexities connected to race and personality which would affect such a group and their relationships to the consultants. In our contact thus far it seems that what was more significant was a different way of approaching problems.

When in the third meeting there was a particularly sticky patch, some group members were fortunately able to air their disappointment at the way we had addressed the problems they had brought, though they clearly did not find it easy to do so. They let us know that they had expected more directive advice on how to manage children's difficulties, but that more urgently they needed help in dealing with the personal problems of parents and crèche staff members for whom they were often the only resource. At that point, although it was clear that some good work had been done in connection with Sibonye and we had experienced the first two meetings positively, we became rather discouraged about whether we were able to offer what was needed.

REVIEWING THE CONTRACT

On reflection we realised that though our original proposal had been accepted by the group, there had been, as is not unusual in consultation work, a discrepancy between the expectations they had of the meetings and what we thought we had outlined. At a rational level and justifiably so, they hoped for didactic "input" as well as expert advice on how to handle difficulties, and had not anticipated that we were expecting to draw on their own expertise. At a less rational level there was perhaps the usual hope we all have that someone can solve problems swiftly and effortlessly, and the disappointment and disillusionment that follows when this does not happen. Also pertinent is the fact that when a group has such high expectations there is usually in parallel a feeling that much is being withheld by the so-called "experts" and a consequent undervaluing of their own experience and wisdom. Perhaps also they needed to convey their own repeated experience of being expected to supply solutions they considered to be beyond their capabilities.

By consensus the following meeting started with a review, partly to address the dissatisfaction that had been voiced but also because it was the last meeting of the pilot phase and we needed to know whether the organisation wished us to continue the seminars.

Several suggestions were made that were felt to be more useful — reading case studies or having formal lecture-type input — and again the urgency of work with adults was stressed. We indicated that we had no objection to difficulties in their adult work being raised but realised that it was essential for us to explain better how we saw the task.

We spoke at some length of our belief that by thinking together and pooling our mental resources a way of dealing with problems could be evolved. We acknowledged our training and experience but also expressed our view that the group members tended to underestimate their own experience and capacity. As mentioned, during this meeting Tandi gave her feedback on Sibonye's family and expressed her opinion that the way the problem had been addressed had definitely worked in this case.

The anxiety and urgency about adult work with staff was illustrated when the matter was raised of Viccy, a staff member whose husband had recently been killed in front of her and their children in an act of criminal violence. The director put a formal question about what could be fairly expected from Viccy in her state of grief, in view of the serious implications for staffing if she were to be unable to fulfil her duties. It was obvious that the director herself was shocked by the personal tragedy of Viccy whom she knows well. She had helped with the practical arrangements, made inquiries about trauma debriefing, and described graphically with a sense of outrage the legal hassle that was involved for the bereaved family. In talking she seemed suddenly in touch with how all this "busyness", though essential, was also a way of coping with the horror of the incident itself and with the general state of violence in the community. On our enquiring further, it emerged from the comments of other staff members that Viccy was coping at present, especially as the principal of her crèche had a very good personal relationship with her.

We discussed the fact that response to shock and response to bereavement, though showing common features, also differed in individuals, and my colleague pointed out that therefore some people might need to withdraw, while others might find work to be therapeutic, particularly work with children. The group took this up and discussion followed, weighing up whether Viccy needed relief from duties or not. The consensus seemed to be that she could manage but that the situation would need to be monitored. I argued that for her, as for Sibonye, one might expect that there would be changes in her reaction over time, and I expanded on the way that seemingly unconnected and trivial incidents might trigger traumatic memories, causing reactions that could be misunderstood unless this was taken into account. My description included some specific examples of how the prolonged reaction to trauma and bereavement might cause difficulties in the work situation for adults if colleagues did not understand this. At this point Cindy, one of the trainers, burst into tears, saying that this was true and that it resonated for her. She was so distressed that she had to leave the room. Someone followed to comfort her and we all sat silently for a moment, and then people started to explain quietly that she had past and ongoing tragedies in her family. On her return, group members were very supportive towards her, but I was left feeling worried that my examples had been expressed too intensely and that we had not contained the meeting properly. My response was to ask her afterwards if she would like a referral to another therapist for some help and she agreed she would.

On resuming discussion of whether the groups should continue, there was firm support for this; the group members who had earlier expressed their disappointment said they now felt they understood better what we were trying to achieve. We felt that we, too, now had a clearer idea of what might be helpful. We had assumed that problems concerning child development would be the most important area to address, but now knew that at least for the next series of meetings the group needed the focus to be on their difficulties with adults.

Boundary between task group and therapy group

When some days later I called to tell Cindy that I had found a suitable vacancy for an exploratory meeting, she said she would take up the offer but also added spontaneously and in a genuine way that she had felt much better afterwards, and that sharing her distress had been very helpful. Though this had worked out well, it is in such instances that the boundary between a task-oriented group and a therapeutic group becomes an issue. We are clear that a group of colleagues meeting in their work setting is not an appropriate membership for a therapeutic group, but we are also aware that some of the issues that are raised for individuals will be similar to those that would arise and be dealt with in a therapeutic setting. The method of eliciting detailed information and encouraging careful observation puts the members of the group in touch with the pain and aggression of their clients in a way that is not encountered when abstraction and labelling are used. This can breach the defensive mechanisms usually employed so that if interpretation cannot be used, other containing measures will need to be taken. A structured approach which requires a prepared and detailed presentation of problems is one way of providing containment. Another safeguard is to move flexibly between what one might term a didactic approach and a dialectic and reflective mode. At all times it must be borne in mind that the priority is training and that the group members are there as fully responsible adult professionals and not as patients or clients.

THE WAY FORWARD: THE GOOD START PROJECT

The pilot scheme described above is the preliminary stage of the Good Start Project which aims to establish a part-time training that focuses on the emotional and psychosocial development for professional carers of under-sixes. This will form a complement to their basic training in child care. A short-term counselling service for parents of young children will be developed in tandem and will provide a low-cost community resource, as well as the training opportunities for graduates of the initial courses. The need for training in such aspects of young child care is of course well known, but although there are several organisations providing good training opportunities, what is available falls far short of what is needed. There is no systematic training for young child workers which deals centrally with the emotional and psychosocial aspects of children's development — in existing courses little attention is paid to these elements. The majority of the population of South Africa have hitherto been denied mental health services and it is vital to build up community resources.

The course will consist of modules, such as Work Discussion (involving seminars like those described in this chapter), Infant and Young Child Observation, Child Development, Work with Parents, and various reading seminars that will cover theory and practice. The didactic contribution will be of great importance, but the emphasis will be on providing an understanding of the meaning of behaviour and a way of thinking about problems posed in the créche setting. As all the students will be in active practice, their experience of the real needs of the community will be an important influence on the evolution of the course and will ensure that it remains in touch with grassroots needs. What they learn will be put to immediate use, and from the group future teachers will emerge.

The Good Start Project was initiated by two Gauteng clinical psychologists. The rationale is that the foundation of mental health and psychosocial development is laid down in early childhood and that parents and professional carers for under-sixes themselves need nurture and support in order to fulfil the demanding role of child-rearing. They considered the under-fives counselling service in the Tavistock Clinic a model which could be adapted to suit South African conditions. This is a short-term service offering up to five sessions to parents of pre-school children, but also includes a workshop attended by health visitors, nursery workers, and other carers dealing with this age group. They have since been joined by the author who trained and taught at the Tavistock Clinic for many years. Acting as consultant is a nurse therapist who trained at Baragwanath Hospital, subsequently worked and studied in London and currently heads an innovative national health project in South Africa. The intention is that the courses will be subsidised so that they may be widely available, especially as workers in the young child field are poorly paid despite the fact that the welfare of future generations is in their hands.

Challenges

The establishment of such a project poses many challenges, in addition to the problem of obtaining financial support. The fabric of South African families has been cruelly disrupted for decades by the laws and practices which promoted the migrant labour system, as well as by the other cruel impositions of apartheid. Currently the levels of violence impinge on daily living in a way that makes it very difficult for children to be made to feel secure. Added to this is the diversity of culture, languages and child-rearing practices which, though adding richness, also means that many traditions have to be taken into account in building up an understanding of what will be most useful for parents and professionals in bringing up a healthy new generation. From the discussions in the groups seen so far, it is clear that the distinction between an afrocentric and eurocentric perspective is not a simple one. The issue is intersected by the usual difficulties with each generation deciding what aspects of family life to retain and what to change. One of the workers in a group expressed her puzzlement in relation to mourning rituals, saying that her grandmother had placed a pot of beer on her grandfather's grave and that this seemed foreign to her, but that placing flowers seemed a "white" practice, so that she felt unclear where she herself stood. It will clearly take time for norms to evolve which suit community life in a free society. There does seem to be consensus about the importance of education and care for the next generations. The work will have to proceed drawing on local models as well as overseas contributions, and with an openness to evaluation and learning from experience.

ENDNOTES

1. Names of group members and children have been changed.
2. My thanks to African Self-Help for their permission to use the material and for what we learned from them.
   Thanks also to my colleagues, Lauren Gower, Lesley Caplan and Lillian Tombi Cingo.

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CHAPTER 12

THE SURVIVORS OF APARTHEID AND POLITICAL VIOLENCE IN KWAZULU-NATAL

Anne McKay

> How can I call myself a survivor, when I don't know when it's going to happen again, and I will be a victim. It could be anytime, tomorrow. M.G. (26), Inanda

> Violence affected me and my fellow youth as the community is now divided. Those who get or have an education look down on youth who did not get an education. There is a great deal of tension between these two groups. The SAP had a hand in violence and this resulted in me having a deep hatred of the police. Violence also resulted in us losing our education, losing our relationship with our parents and I have had to take part in some activities which are illegal. But I need the money. I need some sort of way to make a living. I see people who have something and I envy them and the only way to get it, to get where they are, is the illegal way. Envy and hatred is always a part of me. I know it's no use to cry over spoilt milk, over a bad situation, no use to fight to get what you want. T.M. (21), KwaMashu (*Daily News*, 12 November 1995)

The past is not yet "another country" for African youth in KwaZulu-Natal. While the rest of South Africa is engaged in a process of transformation from apartheid government to democracy, residents of this embattled province are waiting for the internal political struggle between the African National Congress and the Inkatha Freedom Party to be resolved, so that the New South Africa can start to "be".

Hundreds of thousands of residents in KwaZulu-Natal have been directly affected by the political violence of the last twelve years. Twelve thousand people have been killed. The Regional Peace Committee estimated that 500 000 people have been forced to leave their homes. Two years after the first democratic elections, two years after President Mandela was inaugurated in an international blaze of celebration of the end of apartheid and white minority rule, nearly 100 people a month are killed in political violence, and communities still live in fear of each other. Members of the police are still implicated in political murders. Displacees are still waiting for peace in their areas so that they can go home.

It may be that even in other provinces of South Africa, where political violence is not a problem, there is a feeling that the New South Africa is not offering them something substantially better than the old. For many thousands of young African people, transformation feels like it has come too late. Thousands had left school, some to join the liberation struggle, some because their schools were under threat, some because their families were forced to flee from violence. Even for those who do complete school, the unemployment rate is exceedingly high. Family expectations keep the pressure up for youth to find formal employment to supplement family incomes. The hurt of racism is still keenly felt.

This is a challenging dynamic to work with. South Africa is, in fact, the New South Africa. Mandela, not De Klerk, is president. Mufamadi, not Vlok, is Minister of Safety and Security. Affirmative action is securing opportunities for black people which were previously denied on racial grounds or by the less obvious "old [white] boys' network". The Minister of Land Affairs is tasked with getting land or compensation for forcibly removed communities. Water and telephones are being connected to previously denied rural areas. There is a different and developing external environment.

Nevertheless, many young black people do not feel that their lives have changed. Or perhaps they do, but not when they are in workshops where they talk about the past. Or when they are with a white facilitator. Or perhaps they sometimes experience the changes as real and sometimes they do not. This raises interesting questions for people working with survivors of violence. Is this experiencing the present as the past a form of transference in the psychotherapeutic sense? (Note: "transference" is taken to mean the transferring of feelings from a past relationship to one in the present (Malan, 1979).) Or does the experience of living in violent communities keep youth continually trapped in "the old South Africa"? Or does it reflect the way in which trauma has imprinted itself on their lives? And how do those organisations and individuals who concern themselves with youth create space for these feelings to be heard and understood?

This chapter will explore the experience of the KwaZulu-Natal Programme for Survivors of Violence in working with children and youth who have been affected by political violence. The importance of developing a way of working which deals with the psychological aftermath of apartheid as well as of the trauma of overt violence will be discussed. A case study from the youth programme will be presented to illustrate the interconnectedness of the effects of apartheid and violence in the lives of young people. A discussion of the concept of the loss of good authority will be presented as a possible theoretical approach to working in communities where violence has disrupted and distorted previous supportive social relations.

One of the difficulties we have faced in the programme is the lack of a coherent theoretical structure for our work. From the beginning, the project has been shaped by what the survivors have asked for. From there we have tried to integrate it with what we know of psychological and developmental theory. There are several bodies of literature which address different aspects of the problem. The literature on trauma and continuous traumatic stress has been a guideline for dealing with feelings related to traumatic events. Empowerment and development theory has informed our approach to community work. Based on the theoretical developments and practical implications of the work of Melanie Klein and Donald Winnicott — two psychoanalysts who worked with children, an object relations understanding of how delinquent behaviour develops in a situation of severe deprivation has shed light on some of the intense feelings which arise in the youth groups. This chapter is an attempt to put it all together. The inevitable gaps and inconsistencies highlight areas for further research.

A SPIRAL OF SUFFERING

> Emotionally, I haven't recovered from what happened to me. My problem is that I cannot see the victimiser apologising to me, the victim, for what happened. I suffer from depression and stress.
>
> Even when I get a job, I am employed by a white man, shouting at me for not doing the right thing, saying I'm not right, never doing the right thing. At my age, he shouts at me. How am I going to get out of this cycle? I want to be educated, but do not have the money and I can not get a job as I have no education.
>
> I get upset easily. I do not trust any one and have no confidence in myself. Emotionally, I'm upside down.
>
> This programme helps, it's better than going to church to confess. In the group I learn that I am not alone in such a situation. When I am alone, I'm self-blaming, self-hating but as part of the group I can see a way forward. I am not expecting a job tomorrow, but I am trying to find myself, trying to find the one me. Before, I was always two people.
>
> I'd like to see the project growing, expanding, consolidating our ideas so we can say "I am a dignified human being". If the programme goes further then the violence will not repeat itself. We

can become the peace-brokers. M.M., 32, KwaMashu (*Daily News*, 12 November 1995)

Youth in the groups we have worked with can relate certain events as being very traumatic. Some examples are (names used are fictitious):

i. "Sifiso organised a meeting in a church that was surrounded by the police: the police didn't want to listen and started shooting, people ran and some were shot, some were run over by cars. As the person who organised the meeting, he feels to blame."

ii. "His brother was killed by police, and Mvume really wanted revenge, but friends talked him out of it."

iii. "Thuli witnessed a fight between a girlfriend and boyfriend. The boy shot the girl dead at close range. She couldn't tell anyone what she saw because of being scared."

iv. "Residents from another section came over the hill and fired on Eugene's family, burning houses and driving them away, they had to run to the Indian area."

v. "The other party tried to drive out the youth. Solly and his friends had to live in the canefields for three months."

vi. "The chief told them to leave the area. Thabo's father was killed, now they have no home."

vii. "The mother of one of them visited to talk to her son, she was killed when she went home. Now no-one feels safe to contact their families."

viii. "He witnessed two friends killing each other because of political affiliation, they were good friends before."

ix. "He witnessed a man being burned by the necklace method [tyre filled with petrol put around a person's neck and set alight]. The mob was angry because of the man's actions against the community, but it was so cruel to see someone die that way."

Perhaps the most important lesson we have learned in working with youth from these townships is that, for many of them, the traumatic events were very bad things that happened in a context where many bad things happened. Several of the groups we run are in areas where they have experienced political violence since the early 1980s, as the apartheid government tried to suppress black protest. During the State of Emergency, the South African security forces had a "total strategy" to combat what they termed the "total onslaught" of the banned African National Congress and South African Communist Party. This included the monitoring and harassment of political activists, their families and their communities, the detention and torture of activists, and in some cases the killing of selected targets (see Section 1 for details).

When political violence began in earnest between supporters of the Inkatha Freedom Party and the African National Congress, this was also linked to security force involvement. The prosecution of General Magnus Malan and other senior military personnel for allegedly ordering the murder of activist Victor Ntuli in KwaMakhutha has highlighted the way in which "black-on-black" violence served the political ends of the apartheid government. Since the mid-1980s black communities in KwaZulu-Natal, and to a lesser extent Gauteng, have been turned upside down by organised low-intensity conflict.

Even for those who have not lost family members or friends, political violence has negatively affected community life. Many people have lost their homes and have been forced to run away by neighbours who suspected them, rightly or wrongly, of supporting a different political party. Sometimes children have been separated from their parents in the chaos, and have ended up as street children. Politicians have been able to exploit political violence to build their reputations as "warlords" and impose military-style discipline on "their" areas. Children and parents who support different political parties have been separated, with communities not tolerating differences of opinion. Criminals have been able to exploit the situation in some areas, operating as a mafia and collecting protection money. Young men have left school behind to become part of self-protection units or self-defence units. Ordinary people trying to make ends meet have lived for months or years at a time in intense fear of violence breaking out in their area again.

More than a decade of political violence has imposed further immense stress on people whose lives under apartheid were difficult enough already. The above description is very generalised, and each situation in each area has its own history and dynamics. However, any resident of KwaZulu-Natal will say that the threat of continued violence is the main problem preventing the long hoped for development from taking place.

There are some specific issues related to apartheid and violence which have affected the psychological well-being of young people.

Family disruption

The traditional domain of psychology is that of the intimate, the familial and personal. One of the issues facing us in our work is the immense need for therapeutic interventions to deal with this dimension, as well as the social and political. Emotional deprivation can exist in any social context. However, in South Africa, apartheid not only failed to promote the well-being of children, but also systematically created conditions which broke down families' abilities to care for and nurture their children (Straker & Moosa, 1988).

The disruption of parent-child relationships was pervasive. There is a Zulu saying: "Intandane enhle umakhothwa unina" - the fortunate orphan is he/she who is licked by his/her mother (i.e. the child is better off with the mother under unbearable circumstances, than with the father). The implication is that the unfortunate ones are those who are not with their mothers or their mothers' families, because they will be tolerated but not "licked" with love.

Extended families, grandmothers in particular, have played an important role in looking after and nurturing children whose parents were forced to be away from them for reasons of work. However, in many families, this system has broken down under the stress of poverty, and children who have been looked after by relatives are not necessarily loved and cared about, even if cared for. "Most homeland children grow up without their fathers and many without their mothers. Most are sub-optimally nurtured by guardians [mostly, ageing grandparents] who are seldom as competent or as uniquely motivated... as a loving, resourceful parent would be (Thomas, 1987 in Duncan & Rock, 1994, p. 53). Thomas was writing about the plight of children in the homelands, but the situation she describes is also applicable to many township families.

In each of our youth groups, there are several members whose parents abandoned them at a young age, who brought themselves up with siblings, who were taken in by extended families which did not nurture them, who moved from homes because they felt neglected or abused by those responsible for them, who ran away from caretakers to look for absent parents, who learned at a very young age to survive by attaching themselves to whoever would offer some support — be it neighbour, friends or community organisations. The resilience shown by these young people is deeply impressive: they have soldiered on, making their way through school and into responsible roles in the community while coping with the intense pain of rejection and not belonging. For many it seems that political and community organisations have provided a home and a place of belonging which has been essential to their emotional survival.

Apartheid's systematic destruction of black family life has the serious consequence that a growing number of young black children have lost respect for their parents, who, in turn, have lost confidence in their ability to parent (Dawes & Finchelescu, 1993; Ramphele, 1992, Davies, 1990 in Duncan & Rock, 1994). Researchers have noted that it is through identification with, and education by, parents that social norms and rules are transmitted to children. Where this is absent, or the parents are seen as not worthy of respect, this vital part of communal living is jeopardised. Again, community organisations have provided, and can continue to provide, an alternative "home" and supportive mentoring environment, in which young people can be integrated into communal life. This would seem to be a priority for the survival of communities, if not society as a whole — not only for the emotional health of children in need of a stable home.

Forced separation of children from parents

There are no figures that reflect the extent to which young people have been forced out of areas where their families live because they have political differences with the dominant political party. Violence monitors have drawn us into working with groups of displaced youth from rural areas who are living in very difficult circumstances in townships where they are politically acceptable. Welfare agencies, street children shelters and violence monitoring groups have tried to assist other groups of displaced youth and children, but as yet there is no official government response. Some are not even ten years old, and desperately missing their homes and parents.

At a youth leadership workshop, the displaced youth listed their problems:

> We are refugees, and we want to go home ... We are not schooling nor do we have employment ... We have no money ...We don't have places where we can live properly ...We are harassed by the police ...We don't know when we are going to be able to see our parents ... We don't have bedclothes, nor clothes to wear ... We don't get any help from the [political party] office ... The killers are not jailed.

It is our observation that these young people are in a state of extreme stress and vulnerability. Despite the efforts of violence monitors to champion their cause, they are not receiving material support from welfare structures. They are living on sufferance, and are therefore vulnerable to exploitation, in an area where their political party is dominant. They feel cut off, lonely and not able to relax. Their friends are their support, yet many have said that they don't know how to trust. Many seem afraid that people will laugh at them if they express pain and vulnerability.

Loss of homes

The KwaZulu-Natal Regional Peace Committee estimated that by 1994 500 000 people had lost their homes in political violence. Displacees are frequently given immediate relief by the Red Cross. Thereafter, they have to rely on the charity of church organisations and, in some cases, welfare agencies for limited assistance. Peace committees have tried to negotiate the safe return of displacees to their homes, but in many areas local leaders will not accept them back.

The psychological distress of losing a home has been well documented in South African studies of communities which were forcibly removed under the Group Areas Act (see Section 1). It is very likely that the distress caused by being forced from home by violence and in the face of threat to one's life may be even more traumatic.

Apartheid, racism and anger

Apartheid has also had a direct effect on the self-confidence of many black youth. The Black Consciousness Movement and African National Congress and other black political and social organisations were powerful in identifying and challenging negative racial stereotypes and asserting the value of blackness and Africanness. However, the banning and forcing underground of the liberation movements in the 1960s limited their ability to counter the racism propounded by the apartheid state. For some black people who grew up under apartheid, there appears to be an internal conflict between a conscious rejection of racist stereotypes and a residual feeling of inferiority. Racism is not the only cause of low self-esteem: it is a complex phenomenon, but apartheid spared no effort to make black people feel bad about themselves, both at the level of propaganda and in ensuring poor living conditions and sub-standard education.

The anger and resentment which young black people feel about racism and the economic deprivations of apartheid has not, in our experience, been ameliorated by the political changes. What is perhaps different is a new sense of freedom to express rage. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission is in its early stages. The public hearings have evoked the bitter memories of past atrocities. We have yet to see how far the public airing of the grief and pain of survivors, and (hopefully) the confessions of the perpetrators, will go towards healing the wounds of the past. At the time of writing this, the wounds feel raw and the anger unresolved.

A workshop on the North Coast with survivors of violence, including displacees, indicated that all the participants were struggling with issues around race. We decided to address the issue directly. Asked to talk about what blacks think of whites and what they thought whites think about blacks, the following list emerged (unedited).

What blacks say about whites:

> In a relationship, if you propose love to a white woman, she won't accept you because you are poor ... White people like enjoyment and spending money ... Type of food whites eat is not nutritious at all ... If you are in love with a white woman, she won't visit a 'farm boy' because of humiliation ... Whites are loving husbands and wives ... Whites are very racist, they don't want to eat with us ... They think all black men are tsotsi's and thieves ... They have pride, they won't greet and be friendly ... If you bump against a white man, he won't say sorry, he expects you to ... They teach their children that blacks are animals, their children spit at blacks ... They are only friendly now because blacks have power ... There are some whites who are OK [two of the three facilitators were white], but we are afraid that they will behave differently outside [of this workshop] ... They are only nice when they are in the minority [like in this workshop] ... In work situations, whites prefer animals to blacks, e.g. The dog goes in the front of the car and blacks in the back ... They don't want to share swimming pools ...Whites are still racist ...Whites get paid more ... Most have cars ...They refuse to have blacks as neighbours.

What whites are thought to say about blacks:

> Blacks are monkeys ... Blacks are stupid ... Employees must say "baas" ... Given a chance, whites want to destroy the black nation ... Blacks should always be servants ... Some are interested in helping and teaching ...Their love is conditional, cleaning up the mess is an OK job for blacks ... Others would love to relate to blacks, but they are given indoctrination against us.

In the days of the struggle against apartheid, many political and community organisations downplayed race in the interests of unity.

At this point it is clear that racism, and the conflicting feelings it engenders, is a critical area in working with youth affected by violence. Encouraging expression of anger may make it safe then to explore how damaging racist stereotypes have been. It may help for black youth to talk about self-doubt and internalised racism, in order to build a realistic and confident idea of themselves, with ordinary strengths and weaknesses.

(Note on being a white facilitator: There are particular transference issues which are often expressed in racial terms. For white facilitators, withstanding a strong negative transference is important. In fact, consciously eliciting and listening to black people's anger against whites can at least provide an experience for black youth of being heard and validated. However, many black people's ideas about white people are also stereotyped and prejudiced, and this has to be confronted and spoken about to be understood. For a white person doing this work, this can be a painful, and stretching, experience. It is my personal opinion that confronting these issues directly is better than claiming "honorary-black-because-I-was-an-anti-apartheid-activist" status. As Casement (1985) observes, the role of the therapist is the non-retaliatory survival of projection and testing. It is important for us to hear the communication of painful and unwanted feelings from the group or group members, and to contain our own and their anxiety about these feelings.)

It is equally important to deal with the positive transference or idealised fantasy which often is expressed as "now that a white person is here everything will be alright because he/she has the contacts and the money to make all our dreams come true". Confronting this is painful, as there is often a wish on the part of facilitators to be omnipotent and make everything come right.

There can also be a wish to be seen as a "special" white, not a "bad" white associated with apartheid. Playing along with this fantasy is dangerous and damaging. Both facilitators and group participants need to face the pain and anger both of apartheid's legacy and of current limits in social resources, which are going to frustrate the hopes and dreams of many black youth for some years to come.

Gender

Idealisation and denigration can be expressed in gender-specific terms also. There seem to be relatively common fantasies that young black men have about the meaning and value of having a white woman as a girlfriend. (The reverse set of fantasies is not uncommon either.) This is often projected onto white women facilitators, with a subtle or overt demand to "please be my girlfriend" which is often followed up with "if you won't, it just proves you are a racist".

Gender issues also arise among youth in workshops. Young women in these workshops are often challenging of some aspects of traditional sex-role stereotypes. This often brings out strong resistance from men who identify with traditional African sex roles. The undermining of African culture by Europeans may have contributed to a "holding on" to all aspects of traditional culture, in a similar way to that of many cultures which, under conditions of exile, manifest a stricter adherence to cultural practices than in the home country. Addressing the issue of sexism and the oppressiveness to women of traditional sex-role stereotypes would need to be done in a way which affirms other aspects of African culture. Like all issues which emerge in group work, this calls for open discussion.

TRAUMA AS A FOCUS POINT

We have found that in many cases there is an accumulation of distressing factors in the development of many of the youth we are working with. These give rise to powerful feelings of anxiety, confusion, anger and pain, which cannot be simply explained by any one traumatic event. The background is as important as the specific moments.

It could be that a traumatic event can become a crystallising experience, which somehow explains accumulated bad feelings from a range of distressing events over time, or a background of lack of nurturance and support. In some cases, an event is a precipitating experience which brings out underlying anxiety, depression and anger.

Kohut (1982) noted that trauma impacts on children not so much as a discrete event but as a crystallisation point for a history of distorted empathy in important relationships (in Greenberg & Mitchell, 1983, p. 367). Kohut was talking of the parent-child relationship in this instance, but the observation has relevance to social relationships. In the case of young people in KwaZulu-Natal, not only has there been, in many cases, an inadequate provision of empathic emotional nurturance in the home — for a variety of reasons, from personal to political — but there has also been a serious and prolonged distortion of social and political relationships. Mokoena is quoted in Hayes (1993) as saying that although the role of the family is to protect children from negative consequences of these events, this cannot be assumed to have been possible in all cases.

Kohut's observation reinforces the point that trauma cannot be adequately understood as related to one event only, but that the memory of the traumatic event can become the focus point or nexus which expresses a history of neglect or abuse. This accumulation of experience, as well as the traumatic events themselves, is an appropriate area for intervention, as it is in many forms of counselling or psychotherapy.

Avoiding over-pathologising the experience of children and youth in South Africa

A very strong challenge to the notion of trauma and trauma counselling has emerged in recent years. A problem here may lie with the word "trauma" which, in common usage, may mean anything from "upset" to symptoms of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. Western mental health professionals stand accused of over-pathologising and individualising the experience of children in war situations. Studies of children in refugee situations in Africa and Asia have shown the remarkable resilience and very adult problem-solving displayed by many children in adverse circumstances (Boyden, 1994). The same is true of South African children surviving poverty, family breakdown and other forms of environmental stress — many youth have demonstrated creativity and courage in working out both physical and emotional survival against very difficult circumstances. Many black communities have grown in strength through united action against oppression and through supporting each other in the face of racial injustice and poverty.

Our observation has been that there is no cut-and-dried explanation for feelings of distress and no one method of intervention which cures all ills. For example, many youth in communities affected by violence are very anxious and frustrated about unemployment and feel alienated from the country's economy — trauma counselling will not alleviate this. Therefore we have focused on linking youth to NGOs doing career counselling, employment skills training and micro-enterprise training; and we ourselves work with them on money and time management skills. These skills do not guarantee a job, but they do help young people feel more confident about engaging with the world of work and income generation, and this, we hope, reduces their anxiety and feelings of hopelessness and frustration.

However, development work on its own may not be sufficient to alleviate mental suffering. Not all families were able to protect their children (Mokoena, in Hayes, 1993); many children in KwaZulu-Natal have high levels of anxiety and depression symptoms, and some communities are split and unable to provide a safe network for the people who live there. And even people with jobs are depressed, anxious, drink too much and feel bad about themselves. Even people with jobs are tied up with anger and painful memories of past hurts and fears about the future. Basic mental health includes self-esteem, being able to be in secure and affectionate relationships with family, friends and community, and being able to work confidently (Freud's famous maxim: "to work and to love"). Psychological interventions which deal with the scars left by apartheid and violence on the individual psyche, family functioning and community relationships are as valid an approach to development as interventions which address the socio-economic causes of stress and frustration. Indeed, it is hard to imagine that either could work without the other.

The critique of the medical model of PTSD is very important in fighting the notion of trauma and its treatment being an individual experience. Political violence, crime, floods and fires involve whole communities — and building community and family capacity to care for their members is as important as providing support for those individuals who are hurt.

TREATMENT OF TRAUMA

Although the Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder model is not wholly appropriate in the setting of KwaZulu-Natal, where the stress is not in any sense past, it is useful to consider what has been learned from PTSD treatment.

The treatment of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder is commonly considered to occur in a safe setting at a time after the traumatic event has occurred. Treatment involves re-exposure to the trauma either in imagination (trauma counselling) or through introducing the client to gradually increasing stimuli associated with the traumatic situation (systematic desensitisation and flooding). It is taken for granted that this re-exposure takes place in a safe environment, with the continual support of a therapist who is available over time so that a relationship of trust can be built up (Straker & Moosa, 1988).

Much of the research around trauma work assumes, probably correctly, that traumatised people are different from a psychiatric population in that their symptoms are directly related to an abnormally traumatic event, and not to a psychiatric condition or personality factors. At what point, however, does ongoing exposure to stress and traumatic stress contribute to altering personality or family functioning, as ways of coping are developed which in non-stressful situations would be regarded by the people themselves as problematic? What is normal and abnormal, when horrible events occur frequently? As Straker and Moosa (1988) point out, the term Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder is a misnomer in situations where the traumatic stress is not historical but current.

Counsellors working with traumatised clients from South African townships during the 1980s and early 1990s were confronted with a situation where clients were returning to communities where violence, detentions, torture and exposure to multiple traumas were commonplace. The Sanctuaries Counselling Team set up by the South African Council of Churches with sympathetic psychologists in Johannesburg worked out a methodology for counselling clients who were "on the run" and may not have had the opportunity to attend more than one counselling session (Straker & Moosa, 1988). The Trauma Clinic at the Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation, initially based at the University of the Witwatersrand, worked out a model for counselling clients who could return for more than one session, but who were going home to potentially traumatising situations (Eagle, 1992).

The common components of these interventions were:

i. Introduction to the counsellor, and explanation of the role of counselling, taking into account the client's possible distrust, the need to establish political credibility, and dealing with clients' unfamiliarity with the concept of a "talking cure". Being an NGO with a history of anti-apartheid work was an important first step towards trust in most situations. (In KwaZulu-Natal, at present, it is more important to establish political neutrality.)

ii. Normalising the symptoms, and educating the client as to their adaptive function under the conditions of traumatic stress.

iii. Assisting the client to re-experience feelings and thoughts through a detailed relating of the traumatic events. A careful balance between control of, and expression of, emotions is important in providing a modulated pace for catharsis and integration of painful feelings without overwhelming the client.

iv. Helping the client to talk about anxieties about future trauma, to recognise his/her own coping strategies and work out ways to re-establish these in order to survive physically and emotionally.

v. Facilitating the mobilisation of support networks.

vi. Referral for more in-depth counselling, therapy or psychiatric treatment if needed, and indeed, if possible (Eagle, 1992; Straker & Moosa, 1988).

Adapting these models for work with youth groups

The KwaZulu-Natal Programme for Survivors of Violence was not in a position to open a trauma counselling service. The many reasons for this include:

i. The high level of violence in the province. There are too many potential clients for a trauma service, and so we had to develop a way of dealing with the problem which could cope with larger numbers.

ii. Loss of structure and authority. The breakdown of any kind of authority in many areas where there has been prolonged violence has compounded the effects of trauma in many of the individuals in our groups. In many areas, there is not even the structure of a coherent political party organisation which has sustained many young people in the past. In areas where such organised structures do exist, there is not necessarily access for all youth. The high rate of unemployment and the lack of an organised response by the state to even ordinary residents' issues have contributed to some people feeling despair. This seems to be experienced more acutely now that apartheid is over and the time long hoped for has not delivered what was expected. We saw group work as being better suited to assisting youth to deal constructively with their reality. Individual work would not build the support structures which we felt was necessary to cope with difficult circumstances.

iii. The importance to most of the survivors we have interviewed of being empowered to rebuild their communities as well as their own lives, which has demanded of us an engagement with community issues that is more suited to a non-individual approach.

iv. Group work is particularly well suited to working with adolescents and young adults. This is even more so in KwaZulu-Natal (and South Africa as a whole), where not only did Zulu custom expect unmarried youth to move around together in regiments, but political organisations had youth wings with which many youth identified strongly. People were also targeted because they were members of political or racial communities, and not as individuals. Working with groups rather than individuals reinforces the solidarity and common experience which has sustained people all these years.

Therefore we chose to run survivors' groups for youth, hoping to achieve the same therapeutic goals as in trauma counselling, as well as meeting other needs of the group members. These goals are: establishing trust in the therapeutic context; normalising the symptoms of stress; creating an opportunity for people to re-experience feelings and thoughts related to traumatic events in a setting where these feelings are contained and do not overwhelm them; exploring coping strategies for the future; and building support networks.

There are times, however, when individual counselling becomes appropriate. There are times when people need to talk about their feelings in confidence, receiving individual attention and support for their feelings. The Programme for Survivors of Violence has an ongoing programme of training nurses, teachers and social workers in trauma counselling techniques.

Equally important has been the ongoing, quiet support provided to group members by the programme's fieldworker. She lives in a township in which we are running groups, and she is easily accessible to the group members. Her gentle and kind presence is extremely supportive, as they feel she really understands their situation. She can be visited after hours and on weekends, often making herself available for counselling or problem-solving in informal discussions that go on for hours at her home. Youth can meet her on the way to the taxi-ranks and can pass on information about each other and just say "how are you?". This contribution cannot really be measured in its value.

It became clear after a year of this that the personal, informal time spent with group members played an important and special role. This was then formalised, and a set time was set aside each week for the fieldworker to do home visits. By taxi, and on foot, she reaches every person at least once or twice a year who has been a member of the groups, however briefly. Especially where members have dropped out, or found work and been unable to attend regularly, the home visit provides an opportunity for them to talk about their needs. It has provided a way of getting to understand intra-group conflicts and disagreements with leaders, and this insight can inform the way in which we plan sessions to deal with issues. Visiting people's homes has also given her an understanding of the family situation of each person, time to meet parents and siblings, to explain to them what the programme is doing, to mediate if there is conflict about a young person's attendance. But most of all, it provides a time where each person can talk openly and privately about themselves, what the group has done for them, what they have been through, and what they still need. They can be listened to, feel heard as individuals. It signals that they belong.

Empowerment and healing

Therapeutic interventions with survivors of violence are located in a political context. Empowerment, both personal and community, has seemed a logical framework in which to develop the programme. This was not arrived at by a theoretical analysis, but rather through talking with the survivors themselves. While the deeply personal retelling and mastery of feelings about past and present hurt is important, survivors have asked us for more. A group from the North Coast made a list of what they needed from us:

> Organisational skills; communication skills; skills for sustainable development and upliftment of the area; empowerment in health and education ... Conflict resolution and tolerance ... Chairing an organisation ... Leadership skills ... Help displaced people go home ... Problem-solving ... Fundraising ... Planning and strategy ... Dealing with illiteracy ... Protection of the community ... Avoiding political violence ... Tolerance ... Not being controlled by others' agendas ... How to form a non-partisan group to face common problems ... Implement development projects in our homes when we are not there ... Mutual understanding ... Dealing with and avoiding crime ... Development and empowering of youth ... Planning for my future as an individual.

The high demand in all areas for skills training is an ongoing tribute to the history of community organisation and united struggle which brought an end to apartheid. Political violence, by its nature, seeks to disempower and immobilise those defined as the "enemy", as did apartheid. Empowerment, then, would mean counteracting the debilitating effects of violence on people and communities — the same aim, in different words, of counselling or any therapeutic work.

Understanding how disempowerment affects people is a good place to start. There seem to be at least three different ways in which people respond to feeling disempowered: retreating into despair, and dependency on outside agencies to change the situation; seizing power wherever it is to be found: through crime, abuse of others, intimidation and violence to establish one's own group as dominant over another; organising together with others to challenge disempowering processes, and to be a catalyst for constructive development in the community, i.e. empowerment (Higson-Smith, 1995).

In our youth groups we have found all these responses: people who have become dependent on others as agents of change, and are angry that someone is not solving all their problems; people whose anger and frustration have made criminal activities emotionally as well as economically satisfying; and people who have thrown all their energies into community development and tireless work for others. And of course there are youth who are just getting on with life: partly interested in community development and mostly interested in working out a solution to their immediate problems. The groups can become a place where these responses and the feelings that underlie them can be explored, and the pain can be shared and support given so that the choice for empowerment is made with others who understand and will, in the words of many of our group members, be there to literally hold hands together, "sizobambisana".

Personal development is also important

We have had to work hard to persuade some of the youth groups that talking about feelings is legitimate. Violence and hardship have bred an attitude of stoic survival, in which it is not permissible to talk about fear and vulnerability and not coping (cf. Straker & Moosa, 1988). The only way this is legitimately expressed, it seems, is in requests for financial assistance or "please get me a job".

Dealing with anxiety about joblessness is often, therefore, an important first step in our work with a group. It is our experience, however, that allowing members' anxiety about finding work to dominate group sessions is counterproductive. As much as it is an acceptable way to express other anxieties, it functions as a defense against confronting other issues and feelings. It can then happen that a group which is successfully negotiating employment skills training can actually become more anxious and more demanding that we "do it for them", as the ostensible cover-all defense becomes less tenable.

Even in the poorest and most under-resourced communities, we have found that there are group members who acknowledge that "a job" is not the only solution. "We can find work, but we are not motivated, we don't have the right attitude and we can find ourselves losing that job," said a member of a group in an informal settlement.

Another common barrier to dealing with personal issues arises from youth seeing themselves as strong and invulnerable youth leaders, at the forefront of community struggles. One youth leader reacted very strongly to seeing a facilitator with a book entitled *Training for transformation*. He said that he didn't need transformation because he was not mad, and that people who saw a picture of him with this book would think that he was mad and we were trying to transform him. He was only very slightly mollified upon reading the book — which is about community development.

However, the same person was enthusiastic about learning more about leadership skills and organisational development, because this fitted well with his idea of himself as a youth leader in a youth struggle against community problems. Politicised youth also respond well to the idea of learning to become leaders, as being involved in leadership training gives a well-recognised status among peers. Leaders are expected to participate in community campaigns to deal with problems — and many of the group members have been very active, and are still very active, in community politics.

It is also easier in some ways for group members to talk about politics and the effects of state repression than to talk about how family disruption has affected their lives. Taking into account the need to move slowly from the political to the personal, the model that we developed with the first few groups was as follows: We understood that poverty, unemployment, crime, teenage pregnancy, homelessness and violence are their main problems. Therefore our programme will help them to deal with whichever of these problems they want to tackle, while trying to bring together three elements. We understand that this is best done by *organising the community* to negotiate with authorities, or as a group to negotiate skills training bursaries, to raise funds together and so on. But before you can do community organising, you have to have a strong organisation; therefore there is a need for *organisational and leadership skills*. And because a strong organisation needs strong people, we have to do *personal development* training to help people feel more confident and sure of themselves. This framework makes the group a safe place where personal growth is encouraged, in the framework of empowerment.

Encouraging group members to talk about painful feelings has to be done sensitively. We have found using drawing exercises very useful, such as "The Tree of Life/ Isihlalo Sempilo", in which people draw a tree representing their lives: their origins (roots), influences and experiences (trunk), decisions (branches), feelings (leaves), achievements (fruit), and hope/potential (buds) (Hope et al., 1983). Or asking them to draw an event that was so painful or frightening that they couldn't talk about it at the time. Listening to each other's experience and learning how to talk about such pain often builds intense solidarity between group members. Even groups where members have known each other for a long time find themselves astonished, and deeply moved, to learn what their friends have been through.

Young people are carrying very heavy feelings. The following words are those of North Coast youths:

> You feel like committing suicide, want to run away ... very depressed and hurt, no-one to talk to, very alone, can't trust or relax for one minute ... humiliated and mocked ... hurt and in despair, don't know what to do, afraid ... very angry and want revenge; there are no guilt feelings, I will revenge if I get the chance ... There is a feeling that God does not exist or how could he let this happen? ... The person I trusted died and I had to keep deep feelings to myself ... You regret why actually were you born, good feelings fade and vanish ... You lose idea of the future ... You are depressed and lose sleep ... When you think about incidents, you lose hope about future ... You ask yourself "What about my parents? What about my home?" ... There is no rest because my brothers are still dying ... You develop an amazing amount of hatred ... Community and parents treat you like an outcast ... The authorities don't treat me like a human being, they allow injustice to continue ... When you listen to the radio and the TV, you hear political leaders advocating war, you feel frustrated.

Being able to talk about pain in the groups does help. In the words of KwaMashu and Inanda youths:

> Having heard the pain that people have been through, I want this group to be even stronger, so that we can stand hand in hand in support of each other ... It is good to talk to friends ... It helps talking to experienced adults ... Talking helps; then you hold no grudges, it takes the pressure off, the pain goes out ... If you vent out your anger to a person who is in their sober senses, he or she can reason with you to find a solution ... You want someone, a trusted person, who says your feelings are normal and right, but maybe argues for a reasonable solution ... You need someone who understands, who is sensitive, who knows you.

We also explore ways in which the youth can comfort themselves when they feel the pain is bringing them down. These are some suggestions from an Inanda group:

> Talk to someone, choose wisely, not someone who will pour petrol on your anger ... Play jazz ... Cry, let the feelings out ... Think about your loved one, write letters ... Take a walk, do something physical ... Take a run, do boxing when angry ... Manual labour, housework, tidying and cleaning what is outside of you can make you feel better inside ... Give yourself a break, sleep ... Singing, reading ... Comfort yourself, by yourself or through friends ... After taking care of yourself, when you are cool, then you can make a good decision what to do about those who hurt you, even if it is to revenge.

We end groups when they come to some sort of natural end. We contract with them for five months, but have found that some groups work faster and we can end after three or four months. Ending usually happens because most group members are attending skills training courses or have found employment or have returned to some form of study. We continue to do house visits after the weekly workshops are over, and stay in contact with members so that they can use the office as a resource — if they want a curriculum vitae, for example, or need advice about a legal case. All members of all groups are invited to leadership courses and creative arts workshops (these are two of many other types of input offered by the programme).

CASE STUDY

The session below was chosen for several reasons. This group had been running for just over a month, and we were still feeling our way with each other. Handling the difficult feelings which emerged in the session marked a breakthrough in trust with the group. Group members and facilitators successfully negotiated threatening issues and this created a working relationship on which future work could be built. The issues raised in this workshop also illustrate the relationship between trauma and anger in the lives of the youth of this township.

This was our fifth session with this group. In the previous session we had looked at talking about memories that are painful (these included traumatic incidents with police, parents, political violence and criminal activity). We had not completed this and were planning to continue in this session. Over the weekend, a colleague had been visited by the then chairperson and two others, who were part of an anti-criminal group in the township. They were extremely agitated because they had been contacted by another community member, who had asked them to help hijack the programme car. They had refused, and this person said that he had already been talking to a car-theft gang who were aware of the car, and were planning to hijack it, with or without him. Our fieldworker was afraid that the hijackers would be killed if they tried to steal the car — and that this would have very serious consequences for everyone.

We decided to run the workshop as usual. Once the group members had arrived and settled down, I started the workshop by saying that we were deviating from our plan of continuing with "Talking and Listening Skills", because something had happened after the last meeting and we needed to talk about it. I asked the chairperson to tell his story, saying that he did not need to mention names. I felt quite anxious about handling this situation appropriately because it was a new one for us.

The chairperson told the group what he had heard about a potential car hijacking. Clearly some of the group had already heard the story. He ended by saying he would "die in the attempt" to stop this person stealing the car. He looked upset, but also proud to be saying this. Most group members did not respond much. One of the youngest members, who is also one of the most optimistic, spoke in a shocked way about the need to deal with this issue very urgently. A few others said much the same, but with less energy. I expected that many of them had similar feelings to the car hijackers about the car, about people with jobs and about whites, and that this clashed with other more positive feelings about our project and the workshops.

The following list emerged once the group discussed the possible feelings that may lie behind a person wanting to hijack cars or become involved in other sorts of crime:

> Poverty ... White control of the economy ... Resentment against whites who seem to have everything - even cars - while they do not ... Envy of those who have money and jobs ... Envy from those who have never been properly looked after by families, for example, children of single mothers who are not accepted and feel rejected compared with other children in the family ... Anger at apartheid ... Feeling powerless because unemployment seems impossible to conquer ... Not understanding or being educated as to how the economy works in order to understand unemployment.

Most members of the group participated, some with a detached interest, some with anger directed at myself, some with pain. Asked how people feel, they said, "hurt, jealous, angry, ashamed, guilty, unconfident, envious".

I suggested that criminal acts are ways of "pouring out" these intolerable feelings onto others. One group member suggested that maybe some people poured out their feelings onto themselves by committing suicide. Other examples emerged from the ensuing discussion, and there was some agreement that it was not a good way of coping. After some reflection, one person said he thought men sometimes used sex with their girlfriends to make them feel better, even if the woman didn't want it. He had never thought about that before. The feeling in the group was one of being connected, and members seemed to be really engaged with thinking about this.

When discussion of how people poured out negative feelings was ending, I asked them to think about who got hurt in all of these behaviours. They said that the persons themselves were hurt, and their families as well as the victims. There was some talk of the ways in which people cope with sad and angry feelings in more positive ways. My purpose was to lead them beyond feeling stuck in anger and pain, and to draw on their own experience of more effective coping. I noticed then that several became restless, with the two members of the group getting up and leaving the room to go to the toilet. However, about half of the group was engaged in this issue. Time was running short, and I felt torn between continuing with this or stopping to deal with the stuckness. I carried on, and kept it brief. I felt that it was important to elicit memories of their "coping" responses before we ended for this week.

Some examples were:

> Talking to friends ... Speaking to parents or teachers or ministers to get practical advice ... Running or sports ... Listening to music ... Trying to get further with your plans in life, finding out about education ... Going back to school ... Helping others, for example, starting a debating club with schoolchildren to build their confidence.

We ended the session with a discussion of practical steps. Some of the group felt that the car hijackers should be visited and warned. Many felt this was too dangerous, and it was agreed that the chairperson and another member of the group should visit the person whose idea it was to hijack the car, on the pretext of giving him information about group meetings. We spoke about the importance of understanding why he was feeling the way he was. The group suggested that my colleague and I not use the programme car for a few weeks, but bring another one which was less attractive. [Later we decided not to do this as it would not be a long-term solution.] We had juice and biscuits and went home.

ISSUES

The loss of good authority

This section will discuss the notion of the loss of good authority and its links to delinquent behaviour, in relation to work with survivors of violence. It may seem strange that in our work with survivors a theoretical approach more oriented to work with perpetrators has become useful.

While perpetrators of violence are most often survivors of some earlier violence or victimisation, it is not true that all or even many survivors become perpetrators in turn. There are many different factors which make the difference between a survivor whose subsequent way of life is within the norms of his or her society, and a survivor who "acts out" (Rutter, 1983). Nevertheless, it is important to understand that there may be a link between trauma, social environment and subsequent self- or other-destructive behaviour (acting out). The purpose of this is to intervene to strengthen protective factors in the survivor's environment, expose potential links between the social and psychological stress to which they have been exposed, and explore the possibility that they may be acting in a way that is negative for themselves and others. The case study above indicates one way in which this can be done.

Why is this necessary? Perhaps it is not, and orthodox approaches to trauma management may be enough. My interest in understanding the links between prolonged social violence and delinquent behaviour has been awakened by the mix of young people selected by their community leaders or their peers to be part of our programme. Some are referred because they are youth leaders and have been caught up in violence — usually targeted by police or opponents — and it is thought they deserve to benefit from what our programme offers. Some are referred because they are seen as traumatised, at least in the sense that their material situation is very poor and their access to support and resources is limited because of violence or apartheid. Others are referred because they are seen as militarised and pose a potential threat to their community, while a fourth group are referred because they are seen as sliding into peer groups associated with criminal activities — it is hoped that the programme can mobilise them out of this.

Within all the groups, leaders, survivors, soldiers or potential criminals, there is an explicit concern from both community and participants about the involvement of youth around them in crime and violence. This concern is usually expressed in our first meeting, when we ask a group to create dramas to illustrate "the problems of youth". The list, almost invariably, is: unemployment, criminal involvment, teenage pregnancy, violence, and drugs. The one group which differed said that crime was not such a problem, there were no serial killers or anything like they have in the suburbs in their area (an informal settlement), and such crime as there was involved stealing to survive.

The social and economic cause of crime is typically understood by the groups to be unemployment. Psychological factors are not always easily spoken about, but it is usually explained as anger and resentment because of apartheid, and because of the slow delivery of socio-economic change to black and poor areas. The causes of violence are seen as more complex, but related to the manipulation of the apartheid regime, the cynical power-mongering and hypocrisy of political leaders of the opposition (and sometimes of their own party) and to a cycle of revenge because of past hurts on both sides.

The idea of delinquency being related to a loss of good authority is taken from work with families of delinquent children in the United Kingdom (Pitt-Aikens & Thomas Ellis, 1990); there delinquency, based on the word *delinquere*, means "the dereliction of duty, whether by the individual while in authority over himself, or by an adult over a child" (ibid., p. 15). The authors establish a link first between social and familial factors, and then from there include individual factors in creating the conditions for delinquent behaviour. They also address the "delinquency" of authorities who ignore, avoid or act in brutal contradiction of their duty to children or citizens in their care.

There is no need to belabour the point, but the apartheid state falls into the category of an authority which ignored, neglected, deprived and harshly repressed all black citizens and children under its care, resulting in, among other things, fragmented parenting of many black children, which is documented in much research (Duncan & Rock, 1994). In many of the life histories of group members, there are stories of a loss of good authority, however unwillingly on the parents' side. Some youth were abandoned as children, left to inadequate caretakers, moved from caretaker to caretaker without regard to their emotional needs, or brought up by exhausted and overstressed parents or parent substitutes who could not make provision for emotional support. This is not to deny the tremendous resilience of children and their communities. For many, survival — emotional and physical — depended on siblings banding together to look after each other. Extended family, step-parents, neighbours and kind strangers took in many others and provided homes at some point. However, many still have yet to find a place where they belong.

What is interesting, and worthy of further study, is the extent to which this abandonment of good authority was replicated at other levels in society: policing, education, health, local government, housing. Is the corruption in the civil service, both past and present, related to an earlier fundamental loss of good authority from the top down?

What is good authority?

Pitt-Aikens and Thomas Ellis (1990) note various characteristics which translate into good leadership, good management and good parenting:

i. "Delivering the goods" to the best of one's ability, and taking responsibility for the consequences when this is not possible.

ii. Knowledge of the limits of one's own authority; taking responsibility for everything that goes right or wrong within those limits, and knowing how to refuse to allow the limits to be manipulated by others.

iii. Knowledge of when to start something and when to stop it.

iv. Reliability, consistency, and commitment to looking into the truth of things.

v. An ability to act in opposition to the majority when occasion demands, without undue need to "look good".

vi. Ability to recognise reality, no matter how un-ideal it is, and help those in one's care to face up to what is really happening; avoiding wishful thinking and being able to think about unpleasant things. Being able to plan a response even to difficult situations.

vii. Keeping sufficient distance from a situation to be able to "see the wood from the trees". Knowing when a small thing will lead to a big thing and taking action early on.

viii. Awareness of one's own anxiety and anger in difficult situations, and retaining the ability to think and not "act out".

ix. Ability to to delegate and let others develop and grow.

The breakdown of authority

Communities are affected when there has been a loss of good authority. In one of our workshops, fieldworkers from a development project said that communities break down when there has been enduring violence. These are some of the symptoms they had seen in their work:

> Lack of trust ... Hypersensitivity ... Fear of loss of control ... Destructive behaviour; sabotaging projects that they cannot control ... Accepting violence as a way of life ... Living from day to day ... Planning becomes difficult ... Anxiety about putting forward a view of the future ... People lose commitment if there are not immediate results ... Apathy if projects don't work ... Territoriality; relying only on "our experience" ... Over-reliance on the "authorities" to take responsibility for things ... No culture of making things happen ... Impatience with a long process ... Fear about speaking openly in case others "mark" them ... The stress of poverty leads to not sharing, envy, resentment.

Children raised in an environment where authorities are not to be trusted are vulnerable to confusion and anxiety. One of the central roles of an authority in any situation (home, classroom, community) is to manage and contain strong feelings, which may be present in the people for whom he or she is responsible. Strong fears, angers, resentments, hatreds — and potentially destructive behaviours which express these — may be present at any time, and an authority is expected to understand such feelings without denying them, but not allow the situation to get out of control. This is so that the social functions of the institution can continue to provide for the needs of those dependent on it.

Examples of where authorities fail consistently are legion: it is not uncommon to find schoolchildren in uniform wandering the streets any time from 11 a.m. onwards, teachers are often not in their classrooms when they are supposed to be, police do not investigate reports of crime, social workers do not want to do fieldwork because they are overwhelmed, clerks neglect their duties, neighbours are too frightened to report child abuse happening next door, employers let wage clerks cheat workers, employers cheat workers deliberately to increase their own profit from a job, pension clerks cheat pensioners, and so on. Civic leaders and parent groups are forced to set up their own security teams to restore law and order, while many civil servants at a lower level are either frustrated in their attempts to fulfil their responsibilities or just give up and join in the neglect. It is not easy to analyse the causes in each case of such occurrences of loss of authority, rather more easy to see the consequences, both in the situation itself and the wider society.

What message is this giving to children? What social structures are there which can be trusted to be reliable? What will happen when feelings are overwhelming and there is no safe relationship/community structure/social structure which can contain the anxiety such feelings provoke? This is no light question given the history of oppression and denial, and the likelihood of strong feelings for years, if not generations, to come.

An absence or unreliability of good authority has an impact on identity formation at adolescence. The most important transfer of authority is the change from extrapersonal to intrapersonal authority (Pitt-Aikens & Thomas Ellis, 1990). In the UK this process usually begins at 16 and is completed by 18; whereas in many South African cultures, it may officially begin between 16 and 18 and may not be completed until the late twenties. When this process occurs smoothly, it yields the fruit of self-trust and the likelihood that in most situations one will act with good authority. But the prize of a justifiably trusted self comes from the model of having justifiably trusted others. In many circumstances where families have broken up, handing over authority to children may begin much earlier. But handing over too much responsibility too soon may not be in the child's best interests, in situations where "trust" is another name for neglect.

What are the consequences where children's experience of authority inside and outside the family is marked by unreliability, unpredictability, and non-fulfilment of responsibilities? Pitt-Aikens and Thomas Ellis propose that delinquent acting out frequently follows: both as an expression of pain and anger, and a distorted loyalty to the only model of authority some children know.

The scale of "delinquent" behaviour currently experienced at all levels of South African society is having an effect on how those in authority now are seeing their role; but at what cost? The outrageous scale of criminality experienced at present is forcing the issue onto the public agenda. Corruption and non-fulfilment of responsibility in the public service are beginning to be exposed. Unemployment cannot be overlooked. Arms smuggling and dealing in illegal weapons cannot be overlooked. The consequences of unwise political speeches cannot be overlooked. The "acting out", if you can call it such, is making its point: society cannot ignore the inconvenient and ugly reminders of apartheid's legacy — whether society can formulate a rational response is another story.

This may seem like a digression from the subject at hand, namely youth affected by violence. Its relevance has been in understanding how a lack, or loss, of good authority, as has been the case in most areas in which we work, has contributed to feelings of despair. Most of the young people who join our groups are not delinquent — yet they share the pain and the anger of youth in their communities who are, and these feelings are related to experiences which are common to most of them.

We consciously try to incorporate the idea of restoring a sense of good authority to our workshops. Some key methods are:

i. Exploration and discussion of such feelings with group members.

ii. Awareness of our own practice in giving an experience of reliable or, at least, honest authority. This means noting and in some way responding to any aspect of their lives which comes to our attention, even if not directly related to our primary task.

iii. Honesty about our limits and the limits of the situation in which youth find themselves, hearing their anger and grief at facing those limits.

iv. Linking youth to resources in the community and in the city which are able to fulfil the role of caring and useful authority figures.

v. Leadership skills training, money and time management workshops, strategic planning training etc. — but always with a discussion of what emotional factors are related to being able or not able to use these skills — giving youth a chance to talk about how to be "in authority" over themselves and their lives.

An illustration of this can be taken from the case study discussed earlier. Firstly, despite real anxiety about the possibility of a violent car hijacking, we decided that reliability was important. We also chose to deal with the issue head-on, rather than ignoring frightening feelings and problems. Making space for anti-white feelings to be shared, looking deeper into issues of deprivation, oppression, anger and pain, was a way of valuing difficult feelings rather than avoiding the issues. Sometimes, being able to think calmly in a situation of raised emotions and anxiety is a useful alternative in situations where there has been a history of acting on emotions.

The analysis that then developed in the workshop made the links between personal, family, community and political factors, and explored how they are interconnected. The last section of the workshop was to help group members remember their coping and the organisations and people that had helped them in the past, which we hoped would reconnect them to memories of good that is available to them, and of their own strengths and resilience. It was also important not to end the session without devising a strategy for reaching out to the person who wanted to take the car.

Of course, this is ordinary therapeutic practice. Why it has been related to an understanding of the need for good authority is the overt link between what a person may be feeling and doing, and the political, social and community factors which have had such a dramatic impact on the lives of youth in KwaZulu-Natal. What has been lost in the violence and the years of apartheid is trust in society as a whole, as well as whatever losses individuals have had in their own family or community. What we need to be conscious of is the need to restore this as well.

Being conscious of the need to be a "good authority" informs many of our decisions about how we operate. Not least of these is the taking of time to think calmly and caringly about boundaries and the limits, as well as potential capacity, of resources available to us. This work of thinking is a prerequisite of most therapeutic and development work anyway. Yet somehow the ideas of "loss of good authority" have made the links between the personal and the political clearer and therefore easier to think about.

CONCLUSION

Is this useful? Despite the difficulties of their lives outside of the group, it is clear that the group members enjoy the workshops, are engaged and enlivened by the discussions, and perceive them to be of benefit. Sometimes I feel that just being heard, by adults and by peers, is a healing experience and a great relief. (Listening is 90% of trauma therapy, according to Van der Veer (1995).)

Opening up, discussing and communicating such feelings and wishes has the effect of bringing relief and of allowing them to see past the pain and reconnect to positive memories and previous experiences of coping. These can be mobilised to help them move beyond the burden of the past.

The support and friendship which grows between group members has been very important in giving them strength. Existing friendship or organisational relationships are deepened by the sharing in the groups. The programme's office is a useful base in the city, a place where the youth can come for information, to make phone calls to funders, fax letters and job applications, and it acts as a return address for outside organisations to contact them. This link makes it easier to access available resources. The fieldworker's home in the township is a place where all are welcome to talk things over and catch up on news.

Having a wide range of activities has been helpful. Discussion and debate, creative writing workshops, business skills workshops, visits to NGOs doing employment skills training, catering, selling T-shirts to raise group funds, being interviewed by journalists, organising a major sports meeting which important dignitaries attend: all of these have stimulated and enlivened the idea of the potential resources available to them both in and beyond the township.

In the community, there is a positive attitude to our programme. Our fieldworker has had several community leaders and parents complimenting her on the increased pride and self-confidence displayed by group members. Members themselves have reported feeling more confident in their families, getting more positive feedback from family members, and feeling more resourceful. In all but one group, more than half the members have managed to find the resources in themselves or their families to find employment or generate income from home. And the successful running of community projects has built self-confidence, pride and a sense of achievement in the youth who participated and in their families.

Much of this would not have been possible without the active support of other non-governmental organisations: Khuphuka, which conducts construction-related skills training; Career Information Centre, which has counselled all our groups; School Leavers Opportunity Training, which offers business orientation and practical skills training; Independent Projects Trust for their business skills input; the Community Dispute Resolution Trust for conflict resolution training; the National Peace Accord Trust, for counselling training; the SA Forum for Counselling Therapists who have taken on individual clients; the Culture and Working Life Programme which ran the Creative Arts Therapy programme, and the psychologists and students from the universities who have been active in the leadership camps and committee of this project.

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APPENDIX

■

RESOURCE CONTACTS

During the Goldstone Commission's Inquiry into the Effects of Public Violence on Children, a large number of documents, including conference papers, journal articles, books, studies, and people's ideas and experiences on the subject of children and violence were submitted. This unique ***information storehouse***, reflecting the concerns and ideas of many people who have worked or studied in the field of children and violence, was bequeathed to and developed by the Children's Inquiry Trust.

Since its closure in April 1996, in keeping with the trust's philosophy that information is only useful if it is accessible, this collection has been handed over to the **The Psychology Resource Centre** at the University of the Western Cape, which may be contacted by interested individuals and organisational representatives.

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In addition, an ***organisational database*** detailing comprehensive information about non-governmental organisations, government departments, etc. located throughout the country is being managed by the **Human Rights Institute of South Africa** (HURISA).

HURISA was established in 1993 and was originally known as the Goldstone Institute. Its purpose was to assist the Goldstone Commission to monitor and document public violence. When the commission completed its brief, the Goldstone Institute changed its name and developed the following main activities:

Training NGOs, communities and government in local and international human rights systems and procedures, such as the UN, European Union, Inter-American System and the African system of human rights.

Training in the principles of documentation and information handling to NGOs, community based organisations and governmental organisations.

Maintenance of well co-ordinated, broadly sourced and accessible databases which serve as a resource for agencies, organisations and individuals concerned with human rights issues.

Training in the use of information technology for organisations active in the human rights area.

Research and publications in human rights issues.

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Arising from the consistent calls from organisations for more networking and support, the Children's Inquiry Trust developed and distributed a monthly publication to those who provide services to children affected by violence, by keeping them abreast of both theoretical and practical developments in the field. The publication, *Recovery*, is concerned with the care and the treatment of both the victims and the perpetrators of all forms of violence, as well as with strategies for its prevention.

The publication of *Recovery* is continuing to provide a service, albeit from its new base in Durban, with the collaboration of Practical Ministries and The KwaZulu-Natal Programme for Survivors of Violence, particularly for those working in the field with children who are, or have been, victims of any form of violence. It is intended to be a sort of "clearing house" for ideas, practical suggestions, research projects, information and news; a vehicle to share experiences and knowledge.

It cannot, therefore, serve any purpose without the co-operation of the people it hopes to serve. Contributions, comments, reports, letters, requests — indeed, anything you wish to share — are welcome. An opportunity for children to express themselves is also provided.

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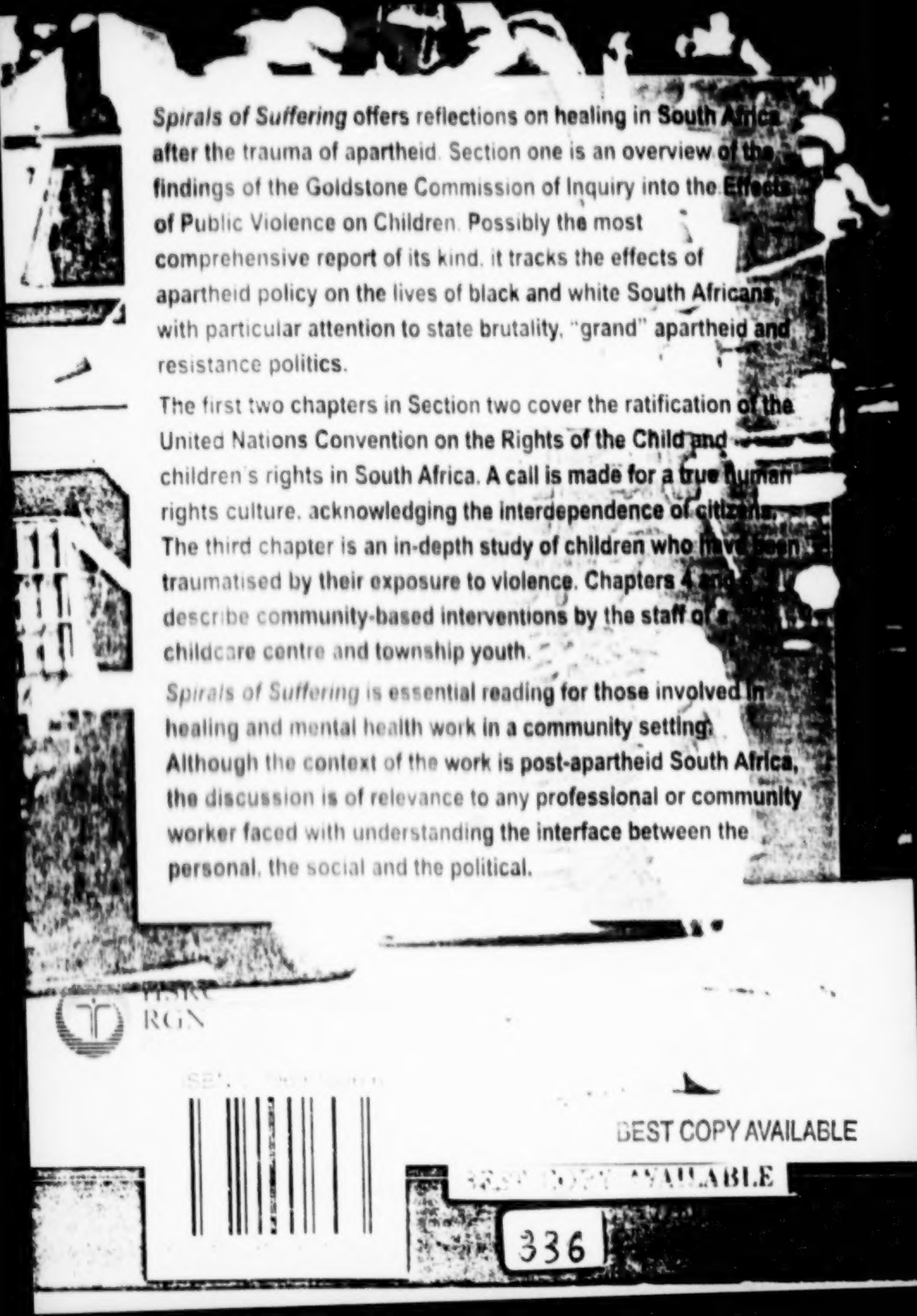
EPOCH South Africa was formed in 1995 as a broad open alliance of individuals and organisations seeking an end to all physical punishment and deliberate humiliation of children in South Africa, through education and legal reform. It has published a handbook making the case for reform, and is collaborating with other organisations in providing leaflets and other materials on positive discipline for parents, other carers and teachers. It is based on the Child Health Unit in the Department of Paediatrics and Child Health of the University of Cape Town.

EPOCH South Africa, 46 Sawkins Road, Rondebosch, Cape 7700; ph. 021 685 4103; fax 021 689 5403.

ACRONYMS

CFCCCD:	Child, Family and Community Care Centre of Durban
CFU:	Child and Family Unit, Transvaal Memorial Institute
CIS:	Centre for Intergroup Studies
CPA:	Centre for Peace Action
CTCWS:	Cape Town Child Welfare Society
DCFWS:	Durban Child and Family Welfare Society
DNHPD:	Department of National Health and Population Development
DP:	Democratic Party
HRC:	Human Rights Commission
HSRC:	Human Sciences Research Council
ICRC:	International Committee of the Red Cross
IISA:	Inkatha Institute of South Africa
INR:	Institute of Natural Resources
JEP:	Joint Enrichment Project
MRC:	Medical Research Council
NCRC:	National Children's Rights Committee
SAIRR:	South African Institute of Race Relations
SANCCFW:	South African National Council for Child and Family Welfare
SAP:	South African Police
SACRC:	South African Committee of the Red Cross
UNICEF:	United Nations Children's Fund
UNOMSA:	United Nations Observer Mission in South Africa



Spirals of Suffering offers reflections on healing in South Africa after the trauma of apartheid. Section one is an overview of the findings of the Goldstone Commission of Inquiry into the Effects of Public Violence on Children. Possibly the most comprehensive report of its kind, it tracks the effects of apartheid policy on the lives of black and white South Africans, with particular attention to state brutality, "grand" apartheid and resistance politics.

The first two chapters in Section two cover the ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and [illegible] children's rights in South Africa. A call is made for a true human rights culture, acknowledging the interdependence of citizens. The third chapter is an in-depth study of children who have been traumatised by their exposure to violence. Chapters 4 and 5 describe community-based interventions by the staff of a [illegible] childcare centre and township youth.

Spirals of Suffering is essential reading for those involved in healing and mental health work in a community setting. Although the context of the work is post-apartheid South Africa, the discussion is of relevance to any professional or community worker faced with understanding the interface between the personal, the social and the political.

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